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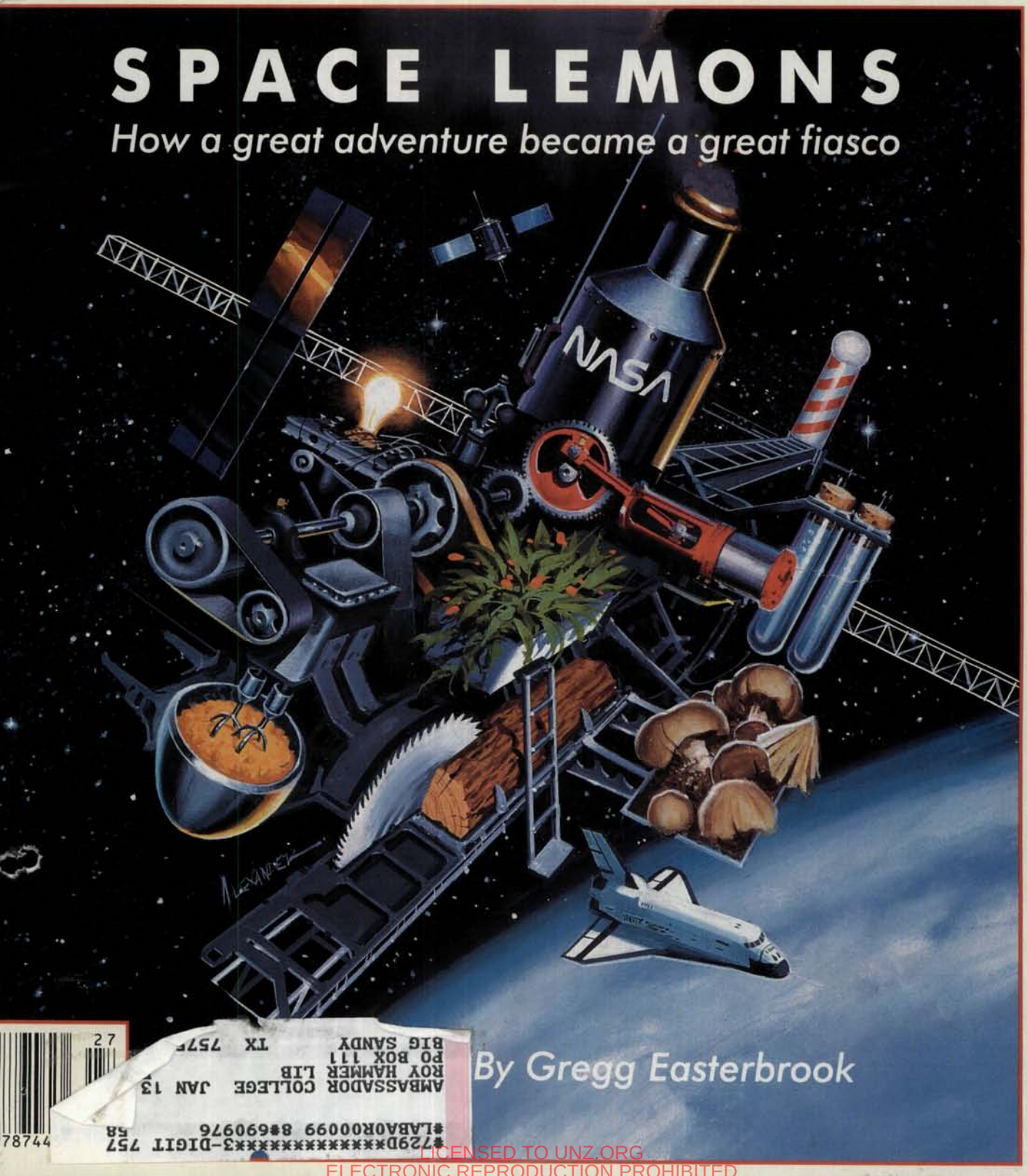

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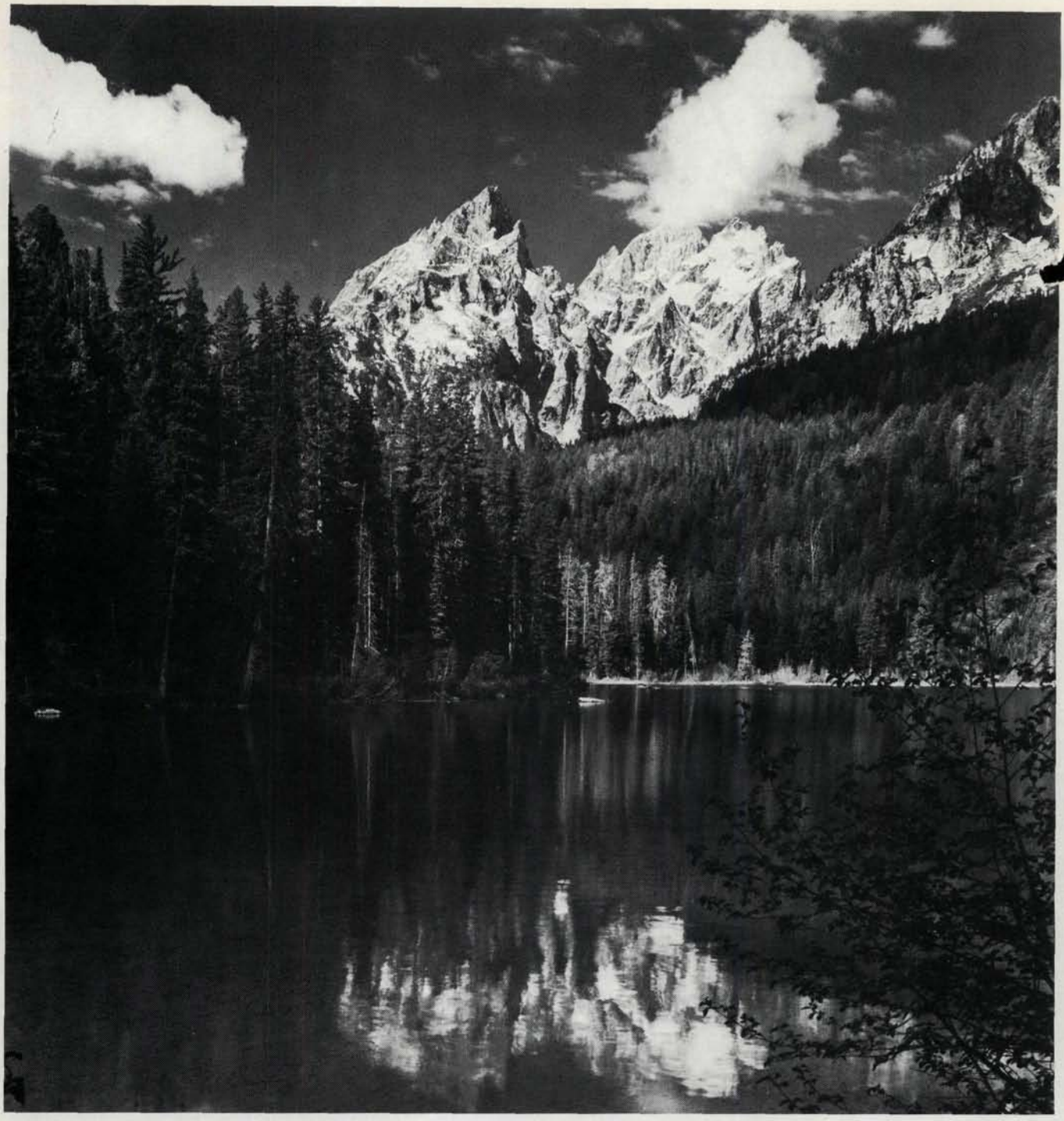

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A Weekly Journal of Opinion

JULY 8, 1991

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 3,990

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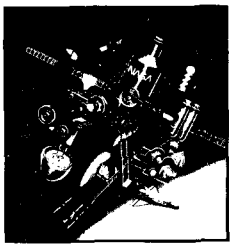

Cover by Paul Alexander for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 18.

4 **MICHAEL KINSLEY** TRB: REALITY CHECK Ethics and the 'perceptions' dodge.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** Britain's one-party state, more Jewish rock stars, &c.

7 **THE EDITORS** BREAKING THE CODES A Supreme Court victory for laws banning 'hate speech' would be a defeat for free speech. SHAMIR CAMPAIGN Hosni Mubarak's real motives for his latest attack on Israel. NOTEBOOK Reagan's golf meanderings, &c.

10 **CONOR O'CLERY** EKATERINBURG POSTCARD: TSAR QUALITY The Romanovs and Yeltsin.

12 **ANTONY J. BLINKEN** WOMB FOR DEBATE A single currency will be easy compared with getting the nations of Europe to harmonize their abortion laws.

13 **FRED BARNES** TERMINATORS 2 Chuck Robb and Doug Wilder fight to the finish.

15 **MORTON KONDRACKE** VOICE LESSONS The government should leave Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and the National Endowment for Democracy alone.

16 **GABRIEL SCHOENFELD** BEDTIME STORY Will the last member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union please turn off the lights?

18 **GREGG EASTERBROOK** THE CASE AGAINST NASA The dream of space exploration has become a nightmare of interplanetary waste and stupidity. A layperson's A to Z on how America's once spirited and economical space agency became a dishonest spendthrift.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: EARLY SUMMER HARVEST Everybody's not so fine in *Everybody's Fine. Europa, Europa* is redundant. But *Slacker* takes up the slack.

27 **CZESLAW MILOSZ** A THEOCRATIC STATE? Why the Church in Poland, which was indispensable in creating Polish democracy, is now a threat to Polish liberalism.

32 **JAMES CHACE** THE FIXER *Counsel to the President: A Memoir* by Clark Clifford, with Richard Holbrooke

36 **THOMAS W. LAQUEUR** VIRAL CULTURES *History of AIDS: Emergence and Origin of a Modern Pandemic* by Mirko D. Grmek; *History of Syphilis* by Claude Quetel

38 **RODGER KAMENETZ** POEM *Stuck*

41 **ADAM PHILLIPS** SHRINKING AUTHORITY *The Legacy of Erich Fromm* by Daniel Burston

43 **ANDREW SULLIVAN** WASHINGTON DIARIST: TRUTH OR HAIR A cure for recession.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 205, Number 2, Issue 3,990, July 8, 1991. (Printed in the U.S. on June 19, 1991.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 7 & 14, July 15 & 22, Aug. 19 & 26, and Sept. 16 & 23, 1991) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1991 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Reality check

Sometime in the next couple of months, Washington will have its traditional summer scandal. It will descend suddenly and be brief but intense, like a summer thunderstorm. But it will drench the parched political landscape and give welcome relief to desperate journalists and politicos during the hot dry season. Then it will go away.

This happens almost every year. The first one I lived through involved Bert Lance, President Carter's budget director. It had something to do with a bank, I dimly recall, and his wife had a funny name. But it all seemed quite thrilling at the time. Last summer we didn't need a local fuss, thanks to the festivities Saddam Hussein initiated in the Middle East on August 2. But we're unlikely to luck out so spectacularly two years in a row. Come August, we'll be eagerly searching for some malfeasance to blow out of proportion. John Sununu's airplane trips and limousine ride would have been perfect, but—like the hot weather itself—they came too soon.

At some point in this future episode, someone will declare that the problem is not any misbehavior itself but rather the "appearance" of impropriety or the "perception" of a conflict of interest. (Or "the possibility of even the appearance of any conflict of interest," as Representative Stephen L. Neal of North Carolina put it on his 1991 financial disclosure form, explaining that he was investing only in mutual funds and North Carolina bonds, plus Quaker Oats stock because oats reduces cholesterol.) And thus, with general agreement that the problem is one of appearances or perceptions, the scandal will drift off into a misty afterlife realm where Tongsun Park is eternally dancing with Donna Rice while the Wedtech Orchestra plays hits from the Watergate tapes.

What's nice about the appearances/perceptions fudge is its versatility. It can be useful to any party in an unfolding scandal: the alleged wrongdoer and his or her allies, the accuser, the official tribunal, the press.

For the unfortunate person who awakes one muggy August morning to find his picture in *The Washington Post* and three camera crews camped out on his doorstep, "appearances" are a way of turning a mortal sin into a venial one, of conceding error without confessing guilt. In announcing that John Sununu would henceforth have to clear his air travel plans with the White House counsel, President Bush said, "I want this administration to continue to be above the perception of impropriety." Was the perception of Sununu's impropriety a correct perception? Bush was never forced to say.

Senator Mark Hatfield has had a series of ethical stumbles. In 1984, discussing a controversial payment to his wife by a foreign businessman, he said the problem was "insensitivity to the appearance of impropriety." In May of this year, discussing favors Hatfield received from the crooked president of the University of South Carolina, an unnamed friend told the *Post*: "He's really had to do some soul-searching about the importance of perception in the public's trust."

And this one's wonderful. The general counsel of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas said recently the school's regents were "extremely concerned about . . . even the appearance of a relationship" between UNLV's basketball team and a convicted game fixer. The "appearance" of a relationship was a published photograph of three UNLV players and Richard "The Fixer" Perry sitting in a hot tub together.

But "appearances" can also be a way of accusing someone of wrongdoing without saying what, if anything, is really wrong. It is a shortcut to moral outrage, for those who are in a hurry to get there. And there is a self-fulfilling quality to such accusations, since the accusations themselves help to create the perception they complain about.

Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee demanded that Richard Thornburgh resign as attorney general when he announced his intention to run for the Senate. Why? According to the *Post*, they say "he has created the appearance of a conflict of interest by deciding to stay on." Now, either there is a conflict of interest or there isn't. It's possible there's a genuine conflict, but it's intellectually lazy and unfair to Thornburgh to fry him for the mere appearance of one.

The most egregious use of the appearances dodge recently was in the Senate Ethics Committee's treatment of the Keating Five. The committee cited Alan Cranston for actually breaking the rules, John Glenn and John McCain for "poor judgment," and Dennis DeConcini and Don Riegle for "conduct that gave the appearance of being improper." It hardly requires the elaborate and costly proceedings of the Senate Ethics Committee to determine that there has been an appearance of impropriety. Of course there's the appearance of impropriety. The *appearance* of impropriety is precisely why the Ethics Committee was convened. What we want to know is: *Was there impropriety?* If they cannot tell us that, we are not interested in their views or [illegible] things appear.

It's especially puzzling when journalists resort to the appearances cop-out. There was a small ethical flurry in May over Robert Clarke, a senior federal bank regulator, who was borrowing money from banks to play the market in stocks and junk bonds. The usual: *The New York Times* reported that "critics on Capitol Hill said he was insensitive to the appearance of impropriety"; Clarke apologized for having "inadvertently contributed to a public perception of conflict of interest." Then along came the *Times* editorial page to accuse Clarke of "a shocking appearance of impropriety. At best, he's been morally obtuse."

So the press has done its duty and reality has been brought into line with perceptions: Mr. Clarke has put his investments into a blind trust. Surely, though, it is the function of *The New York Times* to bring perceptions into line with reality, not the other way around. Were Mr. Clarke's investments ethically wrong, or not? Perhaps the news pages cannot settle this question, but the writers on the editorial page ought to be able to settle it at least to their own satisfaction.

Emphasis on the appearance of an ethical conflict can lead to the appearance of an ethical solution. In Illinois a few months ago, the leading state labor and business PACs agreed to boycott fund-raisers by state legislators during the months of April, May, and June. "We've been concerned about the appearance of impropriety," one lobbyist explained to the *Chicago Tribune*, which reported that the goal was "to curb appearances of vote buying by lobbyists and a shakedown by lawmakers." Of course what the lobbyists manage to avoid with their ostentatious [illegible]ee months of self-restraint is not *even* the appearance of impropriety—it's *only* the appearance of impropriety. The impropriety itself remains. The PACs are still there, still contributing to politicians, and if they are not managing to buy a few votes they are a fraud on their members. But at least the perceptions are taken care of.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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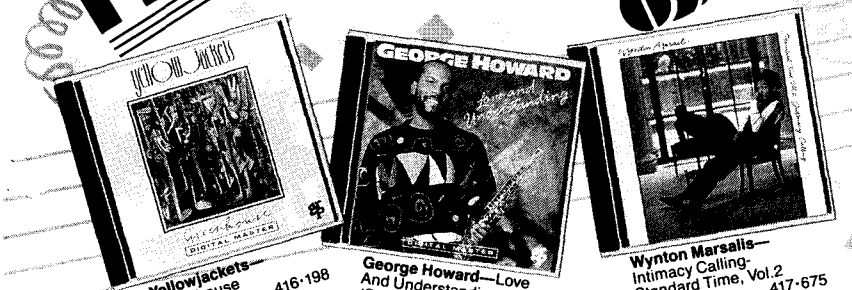

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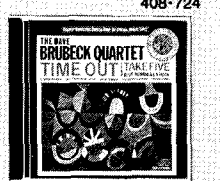

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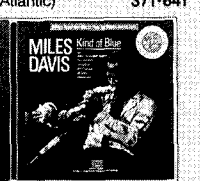

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CORRESPONDENCE

Labour's loss

To the editors:

Hugo Young's "The Rewards of Labour" (May 27) displays a misconception common in the U.K.: that life here was fairer before Margaret Thatcher came to power. It wasn't. In 1979, when Labour had been in power for eleven of the previous fifteen years, the party had very little to show regarding any social legislation, though it had a lot to say about such non-issues as unilateral disarmament. Then, as now, there were no basic rights to protect freedom of speech and expression; protection against self-incrimination was not a citizen's right; there was nothing to protect the individual from discrimination on the basis of age or sexual orientation, and puny legislation on sex discrimination; indeed, nothing to protect even an individual's citizenship. Consumer and environmental protection legislation in England, then as now, resembled that of the United States in the late '50s. For instance, there are today no British emission standards for cars (most of which use leaded gasoline), and pharmaceutical products do not list ingredients or warnings. Labour still has not forthrightly addressed these issues.

I therefore wonder what Mr. Young means when he talks about the "rebirth of social democracy" if Labour wins the next election. This is a country of neither laws nor men but rather of political parties that issue marching orders from the top down, and there is nothing to suggest that this will change, whoever occupies 10 Downing Street.

RICHARD GIORDANO
Manchester, United Kingdom

State of disarray

To the editors:

"The passion for a distinctive Palestinian state among the Arabs, unlike that among the Kurds for a Kurdish state, is derived less from that people's intrinsic history than from their intimate encounter with the Jews," Martin Peretz explains in "Unpromised Lands" (June 3). That does not make their passion any less real. But until the Palestinians abandon the goal of anti-Zionism, there is no place for their movement to go.

To be a Palestinian means to be an Arab, yet paradoxically the Arab and the Palestinian causes are contradictory. The Arab states rejected the 1947 United Nations resolution that would have created a Jewish and an Arab state in Palestine. Had the Arab states won the war that followed, there would not have been a Palestinian state. Instead, Palestine would have been divided among already existing states. If Egypt and Syria had won the Yom Kippur War, or if Saddam Hussein had somehow managed to get rid of Israel, there still would not have been a state of Palestine.

On the other hand, if it is still possible for there to be a Palestinian state, it can be created only with Israeli cooperation. For this to happen, Israel must be secure. The Palestinians can work to achieve this goal by calling for an end to all boycotts and for the recognition of Israel by all the countries of the world. The Palestinians have to separate themselves from the anti-Zionist cause if they are to find their own political future.

GEORGE JOCHNOWITZ
New York, New York

Abortive logic

To the editors:

In his critique of Mario Cuomo's Notre Dame speech ("Dead End," May 6), Andrew Sullivan finds it incoherent for Mr. Cuomo, or any Catholic, to accept Catholic doctrine on abortion but not seek to take away the rights of others to follow their own moral and religious beliefs. Because abortion involves the issue of when life begins, Mr. Sullivan believes that a devout Catholic is principled only if his or her every action reflects the belief that abortion is the equivalent of murder. Under this reasoning, the only truly principled people are those like Randall Terry and Operation Rescue who use physical force and intimidation to prevent women from entering clinics that provide abortion services.

A person's capacity to hold personal religious beliefs about important questions of life and death, while not seeking to impose those beliefs on others, is a sign not of "incoherence" but of humility. Humility is essential to the very survival of our religiously diverse society and critical to our capacity to believe deeply in our religious tenets while tolerating those who have different answers to the core religious questions of life, death, and afterlife.

Mr. Sullivan dismisses Governor Cuomo's compelling point that a Catholic could accept Church doctrine yet recognize that outlawing abortion will not stop women from having abortions. Criminalizing abortion will only force women to replace safe and legal abortions with life-threatening, back-alley abortions. The policies that are effective at reducing the number of abortions are the very ones that Governor Cuomo has advocated to reduce the need for abortion—by focusing on the root problem of unintended pregnancy.

KATE MICHELMAN
Washington, D.C.

The writer is executive director of the National Abortion Rights Action League.

1-900-726-6671

The New Republic welcomes correspondence from its readers. A fast, new way of doing this is our new 900 line. Deliver your opinions—long-pondered or spontaneous—over the phone. They will be considered for publication on this page along with regular letters to the editor. A call costs $1.25 a minute.

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And he's Jewish too

To the editors:

How could a kid who grew up in the shadow of Wrigley Field omit former Cy Young winner and present Chicago Cubs TV announcer Steve Stone from his short list of Jewish athletes (Washington Diarist, "Rhythm and Jews" by Jacob Weisberg, June 10)? I would also like to ask Mr. Weisberg if converts to Judaism (baseball hall-of-famer Rod Carew, for example) are eligible for inclusion in the B'nai B'rith Hall of Fame.

And, in the spirit of the late Lenny Bruce, I submit that Mick Jagger, Victor Sifuentes, and Barbara Bush are Jewish, while Neil Diamond, Michael Kuzak, and George Bush are very goyish.

WILLIAM JAMISON CASH
Boise, Idaho
(Via 900 number)

To the editors:

Jacob Weisberg did a nice job of listing Jewish rockers—for a rookie. He could have included Dire Straits' Mark and David Knopfler (like Malcom McLaren, Scotsmen); Depeche Mode lead singer David Gahan; former Patti Smith Group guitarist Lenny Kaye; Live Skull lead singer Thalia Zedek; singer-songwriter Laura Nyro (from her mother's side); and writer-producers Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller.

Want more? The mother of the Beach Boys' Wilson brothers is Jewish (the former Audrey Korthof), and Brian Wilson's ex-wife is a nice Jewish girl from Chicago (the former Marilyn Rovell). Let us not forget the Brill Building scene of the early-to-mid-'60s. Phil Spector, Don Kirschner, Neil Sedaka, Cynthia Weil—all are Jewish. God, what *terrific* people we are!

Suppose paleoconservatives found out about this stuff? Since Satanism, teen sui-

continued on page 42

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JULY 8, 1991

BREAKING THE CODES

One year ago Robert Viktora, white and 18 years old, was arrested for burning a cross on the lawn of the only black family in his St. Paul, Minnesota, neighborhood. Rather than booking him for trespassing or disturbing the peace, police charged him under a local ordinance prohibiting "bias-motivated disorderly conduct." The law makes it illegal to place "on public or private property a symbol, object, appellation, characterization, or graffiti, including but not limited to, a burning cross or Nazi swastika, which one knows or has reasonable grounds to know arouses anger, alarm, or resentment in others on the basis of race, color, creed, or religion or gender."

A Minnesota District Court judge struck down the ordinance as unconstitutional, citing the 1989 Supreme Court decision establishing that flag burning was a constitutionally protected form of expression. The court found that the ordinance was "content-based" (it depended on the message of a given action), failed to serve a "compelling state interest," and was overly broad. Six months later the Minnesota Supreme Court reversed the decision, saying that cross burning was "deplorable conduct the City of St. Paul may without question prohibit." Last week the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case, *R.A.V.* v. *St. Paul.*

The issues raised in the case have split those who usually find themselves in the same corner on First Amendment questions. The Anti-Defamation League has sided with the prosecution, claiming that the burning of a cross is not "expressive or symbolic conduct" protected by the First Amendment. The ADL supports the Minnesota Supreme Court in its application of the "fighting words" doctrine, which says that words "which by their very utterance inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace" are not protected by the First Amendment. On the other side is the American Civil Liberties Union, which argues that the St. Paul law is unconstitutional both because it is based on message, not action, and because it is "hopelessly vague," and thus subject to abuse and arbitrary enforcement.

The Court's decision will hinge on the question of whether hate speech is one of the few kinds of expression not protected by the Bill of Rights. The two relevant exceptions recognized by law are "fighting words" (*Chaplinsky* v. *New Hampshire*) and speech that provokes "imminent lawless action" (*Brandenburg* v. *Ohio*). Proponents of legislation banning hate speech use these exceptions to argue that hate speech is not a protected freedom under the First Amendment.

This is a superficially appealing, but dangerously narrow, reading of the Bill of Rights. The Constitution does not protect speech likely to incite violence. However, there is a rational and discrete standard upon which the Court makes this exception. It is not legitimate to limit expression solely because it arouses "anger, alarm, or resentment in others," as the St. Paul ordinance does. This, after all, gives the "others" a kind of veto power over the act or speech. The Supreme Court prohibited this vague standard in 1978 when it left intact a lower court's verdict in *Village of Skokie* v. *National Socialist Party of America.* The decision held that a march by members of the American Nazi Party could not be forbidden merely because it would

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offend residents of the predominantly Jewish Chicago suburb.

The ACLU's arguments for overturning the St. Paul law, and ones like it, are entirely persuasive. The organization acknowledges that there is a "fighting words" exception to the First Amendment, which it underscores by pointing to existing public nuisance laws that it deems constitutional. These ordinances are better than the ordinance in dispute because they are content-neutral, proscribing certain actions regardless of their meaning, while the St. Paul ordinance is content-based. The ACLU points out that the Court has typically found content-based laws to be unconstitutional (most recently in the flag burning decisions, *Texas* v. *Johnson* and *United States* v. *Eichman*) because they give way to subjective interpretations.

Content-based laws carry two dangers. The first is that they can turn epithets into ideas. Shouting "nigger," "kike," or "fag" is not a contribution to the grand clash of ideas out of which the liberal faith holds that truth will emerge. Neither, we think, is the burning of a cross (or a flag). But when such words or acts are suppressed by the state not because of their thuggery but precisely because of their meager political or social "content," that "content" is invested with an undeserved retrospective dignity. Epithets do not enlarge the marketplace of ideas, but suppressing them diminishes it.

The second, and more important, danger of content-based laws is that they will be used to punish legitimate statements that upset people. A debate over the merits of affirmative action could provoke such a reaction, as it did four years ago at the University of California, Los Angeles. A student columnist for a campus newspaper wrote an article criticizing the administration for suspending an editor of a paper in which a cartoon ridiculing affirmative action appeared. The student columnist was in turn suspended from his editorial position by a member of the faculty, a move that was reversed only after the ACLU supported his case.

Restrictions on hate speech have also become popular as a way to respond to expressions of racism on college campuses. Almost 200 universities around the country have implemented speech codes. These regulations often mirror the St. Paul ordinance in blurring the line between offensive conduct and offensive ideas. Private institutions do not have the same legal obligation to the First Amendment as governments or state schools, but they have as high a moral obligation to it. In places devoted to free debate, limiting expression based on its content is more, not less, foolhardy. Laws and codes that prohibit the content of speech, no matter how offensive it may be, come nowhere near addressing the underlying causes of such bigotry; they merely stifle its effects. They are an unprincipled way out.

The error of those who support hate crime legislation is in trying to fight racism by squelching it, rather than answering it with their own better arguments. As Justice Louis Brandeis said in 1927, "The remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence." In prohibiting notions of racial and ethnic superiority, in enforcing silence, the government makes bigots into First Amendment martyrs and elevates noxious prejudices to the status of political ideas.

Hate crimes need not go unpunished in the absence of hate crime legislation, since most are also real crimes. In the Viktora case, the ACLU and the defense do not contend that the defendant could not have been prosecuted under other existing laws against trespassing, vandalism, harassment, and disorderly conduct. Police simply chose the wrong law to enforce. It makes better sense, legally and morally, to prosecute someone for harassment, trespassing, or disturbing the peace without judging the content of their expression than it does to proscribe certain forms of expression.

Laura Jones, a member of the St. Paul family on whose lawn the cross was burned, recognizes this distinction: "He has a right to say anything he wants to," she said of Viktora. "But he doesn't have the right to come up on our property and threaten us. . . . He had to come through the fence to do that."

SHAMIR CAMPAIGN

Yitzhak Shamir is not, to put it mildly, the most congenial of people. Isaiah Berlin is said to have remarked that the Israeli premier is like a wall and that, though walls have uses, being talked to is not one of them. President Bush's addiction to talking on the telephone has been known to subside when it comes time to call Jerusalem. And even the editors of THE NEW REPUBLIC have found his personality and more than occasionally his politics a little hard to take. He is short, stubborn—a little man to his enemies in more ways than one.

It is perhaps predictable, then, that the president of Egypt is susceptible to a similar aversion. But recently Hosni Mubarak took his dislike one step further, by launching an unexpectedly personal attack. The Western press, taking Mr. Mubarak's text to be the true testimony of his thoughts, reports that the Egyptian leader is exasperated by Mr. Shamir's refusal to contemplate "land for peace." He refuses because he believes that giving up land may not actually bring peace, a suspicion that Mr. Mubarak must privately share but to which he cannot publicly admit. Mr. Mubarak, after all, was second man in a regime that made its own cold peace with Israel, knowing that the Palestinian Arabs were not ready to parley. That's why Cairo didn't make its retrieval of the Sinai or its new status as a Ward of the United States dependent on anything but its own actions.

There is no doubt that Mr. Mubarak grasps all this quite well. So what explains his new zeal about the West

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Bank, his sudden reversion to the issue of settlements (which though regrettable are not the main stumbling block to peace in the region), his revived passions for the Palestinians? Certainly Egypt's life among the Arab states would be more agreeable if Mr. Mubarak could claim credit for halting Israeli settlements on the West Bank. But Egypt has lived quite comfortably with the anomaly of being the only Arab country at peace with Israel. So there must be another incentive prodding Mr. Mubarak to put ever more strain on the relations with Jerusalem.

One motivation surely is that bashing the Israelis about settlements is likely also to earn Egypt pecuniary points with Secretary of State James Baker and with the European Community. Egypt had already gotten half its debt to the West canceled by joining the cheering section for (while doing almost nothing in) the Gulf war. There might even be some additional hard cash available from the same sources if Mr. Mubarak's recriminations actually weakened Mr. Shamir's coalition in Israel. This is the kind of transaction that every Egyptian leader appreciates. And the sad fact is that for Egypt no amount of money is ever enough.

Egypt's problem is its enormous population and meager productivity. As any standard text will tell you, there were 20 million Egyptians in 1952; there are nearly 60 million now. The numbers increase at the rate of 2.5 percent per annum, or about one-and-a-half million each year—this despite very high infant mortality figures. Barely a quarter of Egyptian adults can read and write. The desert continues to encroach on the 4 percent of the country that is fertile and habitable. Cairo may be the most densely packed city in the world. There are countless people who are literally forced to inhabit cemeteries for lack of housing. There is scarcely the skeleton of a modern industrial economy. For all the sporadic talk about privatization, Egypt is still a *dirigiste* economy. The government employs a quarter of the people, mostly at the kind of desultory work evoked in Naguib Mahfouz's novels. Mr. Mubarak is simply too busy worrying about the survival of Egypt to care even a fig about the Palestinians or the settlements.

What, then, is the meaning of what *The New York Times* called Mr. Mubarak's "blunt warnings to Mr. Shamir"? The tirade set the stage for the meeting of the Paris Group, Egypt's creditors, scheduled to convene in July. No doubt the Egyptian debt will be rescheduled again (it's a startling 125 percent of GNP, but the country is lucky to owe the money to foreign governments, not to commercial banks). The Egyptian state will once again play on its geopolitical importance to stay the hand of the International Monetary Fund and to put off the needed reforms of its economy for yet another day. There is also the added treasure to be squeezed from the Gulf states. This is an old Nasserist trick: the cause of the Palestinians as a way of blackmailing the oil states and underlining Egypt's primacy in Arab affairs. The same issue of the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram* that gave the usual fawning coverage of Mr. Mubarak's attacks on Mr. Shamir had a shorter and more serious item about Egypt's claims against Kuwait, about the "determination of the Egyptian state to secure the rights of Egyptians who were harmed by the Gulf war." Egyptians schooled by tragedy and ruin in the spin control of their leaders will understand the relative weight of these two items. Cairo is now out for rent to Riyadh.

This, of course, would be bad news for the Palestinians. But even now, as Mr. Mubarak ostentatiously raises his voice for them, Egyptian diplomacy feasts on the misery of the Palestinians and of the hapless Yemenis. (This misery is a direct consequence of the Gulf war. Perhaps 100,000, maybe 150,000 Palestinians have been driven out of Kuwait since its liberation; others left before, and still more are likely to go in the immediate future. It would be prudent for them not to remain.) Cairo now wants each of these exiled Palestinians replaced by an Egyptian worker, so that his remittances can temporarily relieve the unrelievable economic distress of Egypt. Cairo also wants to send Egyptians to replace the million or so Yemenis who were ejected from Saudi Arabia when Yemen sided with Baghdad. (Saudi Arabia never let in many Palestinians to work.) Egypt is not more delicate about these displaced people and the tottering economy of Yemen than it is about the Palestinians. Nothing would be better for Egypt than if a million Egyptian workers were put to work in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

We should watch the migratory patterns of Egyptian workers. If many of them suddenly show up in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Mr. Mubarak may miraculously find it superfluous to lambaste the Israelis any longer in order to appease the rulers of those two countries. As the paychecks wend their way back to the streets of Cairo, the exigencies of posture-politics may no longer hold sway. And Mr. Shamir may seem a quite tolerable fellow.

NOTEBOOK

AMBUSHED: In our final regular 900 poll, a whopping 84 percent of callers said they would not vote to re-elect George Bush as president of the United States, if an election were held tomorrow. Mercifully, perhaps, no callers appended an opinion on whether they could bring themselves to vote for a Democrat either.

INSIDE REAGAN'S BRAIN: There must be a benign interpretation of Ronald Reagan's recent remarks about the so-called October Surprise, but it's hard to imagine what it is. Asked while playing golf with President Bush whether he tried to delay the release of the Iranian hostages in 1980, Reagan said he was trying to get them out. "I did some things, actually, the other way to try and be of help in getting those hostages out. I felt very sorry for them—of getting them out of

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there," he said. The official line, as the former president had perhaps forgotten, is that his campaign staff rebuffed overtures from the Iranians since "we only have one government at a time," in the words of Richard Allen. Mr. Reagan's less-coherent-than-ever elaboration did not elucidate much, but it certainly keeps suspicions alive. "This whole thing that I was worried about that as a campaign thing is absolute fiction. . . . From the very beginning that they were ever held there, every effort on my part was to get them home." Asked if that meant contacts with the Iranian government, Mr. Reagan replied, "Not by me." Asked if others in his campaign made contact, he responded that he could not "get into details," adding: "Some of those things are still classified." Political campaigns are not normally authorized to "classify" things, but never mind. Fore!

C'EST MAGNIFIQUE, MAIS . . . : The 1991 award for bureaucratic chutzpah goes to Mike Martinelli, the regional director of the Resolution Trust Corporation in Kansas City, who decorated his office with $26,000 worth of art. Never mind that the taxpayer-funded RTC, tasked with selling off the assets of bankrupt S&Ls, has millions of dollars' worth of art in storage. According to Martinelli, his purchases keep employees happy. "You can't believe the stress level," he told *The Washington Post.* "Everything in the paper you see about the RTC is negative. If someone has an opinion about $26,000 worth of print work that we have on our walls—*c'est la guerre.*"

BAR NONE: Conservatives had a point when they complained, at the time of the Bork rejection, that the American Bar Association had an unfair monopoly on screening federal judicial nominees. But lately the ABA has been giving favorable ratings to President Bush's appointees, and conservatives have changed their tune a little. Last week the Justice Department announced that it will direct its nominees to cooperate only with the ABA and not with state and local bar associations, which have less of a rubber stamp tendency. According to *The Washington Post,* Murray Dickman, a top aide to Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, said, "One of the reasons we have accepted the ABA is so we don't have to deal with the numerous state and local bar associations. We can't let everybody get their nose under the tent on this." Why not? Worried about possible liberal objections? The Justice Department should get over this. The best guard against bias—right-wing or left-wing—is to open up the evaluation process to all bar associations.

HURRY UP, PLEASE: Applications for next year's Marie Syrkin Fellowship will be due January 15, 1992—not 1993, as erroneously reported in last week's Notebook. ●

EKATERINBURG POSTCARD

TSAR QUALITY

By Conor O'Clery

As soon as we left the fields to enter the pine forest where the remains of Czar Nicholas II and his family are said to have been scattered, the mosquitoes attacked us in stinging clouds. They were no more than an inconvenience for my companion, a local journalist named Sergei Molodtsov, but with my hands and face swelling fast we had to flee from the defenders of the last secrets of the czar. Besides, as Sergei said, in early summer even the villagers who live on these gentle slopes of the Urals avoid the forests because of the *klesch,* a tiny clinging insect that bites behind the ear and can cause paralysis or death.

It isn't just the insects that have deterred strangers from the mine dug deep in the forest where in 1918 the Bolsheviks allegedly burned and destroyed with acid the bodies of the Romanovs. Until now the region was closed to foreigners. The peasants living in wooden houses nearby acknowledged the existence of the mine but gave vague and contradictory directions, as if it were still unwise to probe into the darkest deeds of the Revolution.

By an irony of history, the blood of the czars may have fertilized the arid soil of democracy in this remote part of Russia. The region produced Boris Yeltsin, who typifies the independence of character of the Urals peasantry, who rose up seven decades ago to topple the czarist dynasty and is now repeating the process against Communist totalitarianism. Yeltsin was Party chief here from 1976 to 1985 and is remembered as a "good czar," a rare Communist boss who cared for the people, and the people have remained loyal to him in his struggle to reform the system in the hope of a better life.

With the memory of the czar now being revived under glasnost, Russian historians have begun new investigations of one of the century's great murder mysteries at the iron-ore shaft and other abandoned mines in the district where victims of the Red Army were dumped. A local museum director, Vadim Viner, refused to say where. He feared an invasion of people looking for relics. What is known for certain about the fate of the Romanovs is that, after the Bolshevik Revolution, Czar Nicholas II, the Czarina Alexandra, their son, Alexei, and daughters Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia, along with their dog Jemmy, were imprisoned in a merchant's residence called Ipatiev House in Ekaterinburg, fourteen miles to the south of the mine excavations. On the night of July 16, 1918, the czar was shot in the

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basement of Ipatiev House. Investigations ordered by White forces, who nine days later captured the town, found the family was murdered with him and all the bodies taken to the forest. Many historians subsequently claimed that the family was taken away in a closed train, and that Anastasia at least escaped, to live out her days as Anna Anderson in Charlottesville, Virginia, the tragic princess portrayed by Ingrid Bergman in the film named after her.

The Bolsheviks returned to Ekaterinburg in 1919 and renamed the town Sverdlovsk in honor of revolutionary leader Yankel Sverdlov, whom many people blame for ordering the murder of the czar. For good measure, the Bolsheviks named the gardens near Ipatiev House the "Square of People's Revenge." Decades later the Communists still seemed intent on surrounding the murder site with their symbols. A monument to Communist youth was erected across the road from the house in 1958. Later the slogan "Long Live Lenin and the Nation" was put up in huge letters across the top of three apartment blocks a short distance away. An Orthodox church nearby was converted to a museum of the Revolution, though it has now been given back to the faithful.

Some ten years ago the Kremlin got worried about a monarchist revival when curious people began making pilgrimages to peer through the windows of Ipatiev House. Yeltsin, then the Sverdlovsk Party chief, ordered it leveled on instructions from the Politburo, though he has since admitted in his autobiography, *Against the Grain*, "Sooner or later we will be ashamed of this piece of barbarism." A high, Orthodox cross, erected by supporters of the return of the monarchy, now stands on the square of granite chips that marks the site. It is guarded day and night by a handful of believers of the "Orthodox church abroad," a radical offshoot of the Russian Orthodox Church that has made the czar a saint. They live in a nearby metal hut and emerge to ask tourists not to smoke on this sacred place, where a church will be built with the cellar reconstructed beneath as a memorial museum.

"For years we were taught at school that the murder was a just act, that the czar was a despot," recalled Valentina Pyatrikeva, director of a local travel agency, as we watched a busload of Russian tourists arrive, cameras in hand. Musing on the new veneration for the czar she remarked, "We Russians have no golden mean. To some people the czar is Christ and this is a C[illegible]ry." Valentina, who was never a Communist, added, "We like mythology. After the monarchy we were taught Bolshevik mythology; now we are being taught democratic mythology."

Valery Cherintsev, a burly secretary of the Sverdlovsk Communist Party, can trace his political ancestry to the Bolsheviks of 1918, for whom his grandfather worked as a railway man. He refused to condemn the czar's murder. "I can't say if it was a crime or not," he said in Party headquarters, the highest and most splendid office block in town, also the work of Yeltsin. "These things happened in revolutions. Look at France in the eighteenth century." Perhaps to highlight the parallel, a plaza in the city has been called "The Square of the Paris Commune." It is dominated by a statue of Sverdlov, a short, bearded man gesticulating from the top of a ten-foot boulder that has been whitened at its base by the constant scrubbings of policemen removing anti-Communist slogans.

The city of 1.3 million people is now the center of radical politics in provincial Russia (it gave Yeltsin 90 percent support in the June 12 presidential elections). And it is gradually assuming its former title. "If you post a letter to an address in 'Ekaterinburg' instead of 'Sverdlovsk' it will arrive OK," said Sergei, who works for the radical newspaper *Na Smenu* (Toward Change). "The question is resolved. It's only a matter of time and money."

The Kremlin is nervous about this pro-reform metropolis, and Interior Ministry troops occasionally mount traffic checks, ostensibly to search for arms and contraband. Outside my hotel, which was infested with both mosquitoes and cockroaches, a member of a patrol opened fire with a revolver one evening in a vain attempt to halt a car. "We keep order here on behalf of Moscow," he told me afterward. "The local police are corrupt, they have all been bought off."

The city's Komsomol organization symbolizes the changed times. Officially the youth branch of the Communist movement, it has abandoned Communist ideology. The Komsomol museum in the city center, of which Vadim Viner is the historian, has sections devoted to the repressions of Stalin and the distortions and lies of the Brezhnev era. Vadim said he had seen all the archives relating to the murder of the czar and had established that five Bolsheviks fired at him in the cellar—Yermakov, Medvedev, Yurovski, Ivagonov, and Nikulin—but that he was killed by only one bullet. The other family members had also been murdered there. "Anastasia did not live," he said. He admitted that the deliberate distortions and false trails left by the Reds and the Whites in the intrigues of the times had created many "contradictions." He was working now on a theory that the family of a rich merchant, who also had five children, was killed at the same time and the remains of their bodies were left at the mine to deceive the White forces into thinking the Romanovs were dead. The fact remains that the bodies have never been found. Sergei was skeptical. The Party had the bones, he thought, and was refusing to say so.

The Komsomol is nevertheless helping to organize a mid-August congress in Ekaterinburg/Sverdlovsk of international historians and writers on the mystery of the czar in order to debate the contradictory evidence from the archives and the mine shafts. They would be well advised to bring an open mind, and lots of mosquito repellant.

CONOR O'CLERY is Moscow correspondent for the *Irish Times*.

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Europe's abortion wars.

WOMB FOR DEBATE

By Antony J. Blinken

In Gronau, a nondescript border town, German customs officials linger over the belongings of a young woman returning from a quick trip to Holland. They pick apart her toilet kit and scrutinize her dirty laundry. One of the officials asks the woman, Kathrin K., if she has just had an abortion. She says yes. She is taken to a local hospital and submits to a physical examination, which confirms her confession. A prosecutor indicts Kathrin K. for violating paragraph 218 of the German penal code.

This story, splashed across the pages of the mass-circulation newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* in March, has caused a stink in a country sorely divided over the question of abortion. But the debate in Germany is only a microcosm of the struggle facing Europe at a time when the continent moves painfully toward some sort of unity. European unity is usually described in terms of harmonizing tax rates, abolishing tariffs, negotiating a common currency, allowing for the same social safeguards for workers among member countries. What's often ignored, however, is the strain of harmonizing social mores across a religiously and culturally diverse continent. And nowhere is that strain more evident than on the subject of abortion.

The European continent right now is a virtual schizophrenic on abortion rights. National legislation ranges from abortion on demand with no questions asked to an informal interdiction—backed by law—on any abortion at all. Holland and Sweden have the most liberal laws. Holland has abortion on demand, and the patient is reimbursed by the state until the twenty-fourth week. It's legal in Sweden until the eighteenth week for a token fee, and right up until term if the National Health Bureau gives permission. Britain, which in 1967 was the first Western European country to legalize abortion, has a liberal law: abortion on demand in the first two trimesters, paid for by the National Health Service, and abortion until term when the mother's life or the fetus's health are in danger. Last year, however, Parliament reduced the cutoff point for abortion on demand from twenty-eight to twenty-four weeks and is under pressure to reduce it to eighteen.

France permits abortion until the twelfth week of pregnancy, the cost of which is reimbursed up to 80 percent, and allows it into the second trimester in cases of rape or danger to the mother's physical or mental health. However, the French also retain a law that makes a doctor who performs an abortion or a woman who receives one outside these limits liable to spend between one and five years in jail. Belgium, after much internal wrangling, legalized abortion in 1990 until the twelfth week, at the woman's expense. (King Baudouin abdicated for thirty-six hours rather than sign the bill into law.)

Elsewhere, conservatism is more pervasive. In Ireland an amendment to the constitution adopted by referendum in 1983 prohibits abortion outright—no exceptions. The penalty for "facilitating" an abortion can be life in prison. Spain allows abortion until the twelfth week only in cases of rape, until the twenty-second week if the fetus is malformed, and at any time if the mother's life is in danger. Penalties for performing an illegal abortion include up to five years in prison. Last February Parliament rejected a bill that would have granted a limited right to abortion on demand. Italy allows free abortion for ninety days in state facilities, but doctors may refuse to perform them as a matter of conscience. Swiss law permits abortion "until the fetus is viable" or when the woman's health is in danger, provided a licensed physician consents. In practice, the availability of abortion—which is reimbursed by health insurance—varies substantially from region to region. Poland is now undergoing perhaps the severest test of its new democracy as bishops and legislators wrangle over the legality of abortion. (See "A Theocratic State?" by Czeslaw Milosz, page 27.) Abortion is legal in Czechoslovakia till the twelfth week for a token fee, and into the second trimester when the woman's health is in danger or in cases of rape. But the law is under pressure: model bills outlawing abortion on demand have been floated in Parliament.

The German Parliament still needs to write a national abortion law. Until then "East" Germany is allowed to retain its liberal law, which permits abortion during the first trimester, and "West" Germany is allowed to restrict abortion by requiring that a woman receive permission to abort from a licensed social worker and a doctor. In practice, social workers and doctors in the conservative south often browbeat women into bringing the pregnancy to term. West German law also provides that doctors who perform and women who receive illegal abortions must pay a penalty, and may be jailed for up to three years.

These national differences are often played out in the market. It's known in Europe as abortion shopping. According to France's Family Planning Movement, a pro-choice group, some 15,000 Irish women travel to England each year to take advantage of its law, and about 7,000 German women cross the border to Holland annually for the same reason. Even French women are drawn to Britain to terminate a pregnancy beyond the proscribed limit in France: nearly 3,000 made the trip in 1989.

But inevitably, a political response to the massive divergencies is brewing. Abortion rights groups in countries with restrictive laws are beginning to challenge domestic legislation by appealing to continent-wide laws and codes. Irish pro-choice advocates recently argued before the European Court of Justice that Irish law contravenes the Treaty of Rome. The treaty, drafted in 1957 as the basis for the European Economic

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Community, requires its signatories to eliminate "any restrictions on the freedom to offer services" within the Common Market. The Irish appellants argue that abortion is a "service." Even if the court agrees with the Irish appeal—which experts consider unlikely—it may still find that legalizing abortion in Ireland would "offend public morality" in that country and deny relief.

Similarly, most national medical associations now adhere to the voluntary European Code of Medical Ethics which codifies the right to doctor-patient confidentiality. What this means in practice, among other things, is that a doctor should not participate in governmental investigations or inquiries unless subpoenaed to do so as an expert witness. Under the confidentiality canon, doctors will be obliged to refuse the government's request to report confidential information about whether an abortion has taken place, derailing the enforceability of anti-abortion laws in many countries.

But the abortion rights movement is not, of course, the only player in the Euro abortion wars. Right-to-life groups also are appealing to EC regulations. The French Doctors Association for the Respect for Life cited the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, unsuccessfully, in urging France's highest court to ban the RU 486 "abortion pill." The convention declares that "the right of each person to life is protected by the law." The French Court, hedging its decision, actually held that life begins at conception, but concluded that French abortion legislation is a "necessary and limited" exception to the implied protection of the fetus. Other anti-abortion groups threaten to challenge French law based on that country's ratification, last year, of the International Convention on Children's Rights, which speaks of "each child's inherent right to life." In ratifying the treaty, the French government stated that this phrase "cannot be interpreted as raising an obstacle to French legislation allowing abortion on demand."

To make matters more confusing, Operation Rescue-style right-to-life groups are increasingly active in Europe, especially in France and Great Britain. Last year such groups took credit for more than thirty sit-ins and demonstrations at family planning clinics throughout France. Some of these organizations—with names like "SOS Littlest Ones" and "Let Them Live"—apparently receive more than inspiration from Operation Rescue. Members of Randall Terry's organization spent several months in Europe in 1989 and 1990 to show the locals how to do things, according to Marie-France Casalis of the Family Planning Movement. Evidence of this trans-Atlantic collaboration can be found in some of the right-to-life literature distributed at rallies and abortion clinic blockades. Though written in the relevant native tongue, the flyers are printed in Cincinnati, Ohio, by a company that supplies Operation Rescue.

It's a good bet that European politicians will find the task of grappling with this subject across the continent virtually intractable. It's been hard enough in reunified Germany alone, where conservative former West Germans from the southern Catholic *länder* are locked in a protracted political struggle with the more liberal former Easterners. There, at least, a cultural, national bond keeps the two sides engaged; and they both, literally, speak the same language. Throughout the European Community, however, none of that applies. And the gloves are finally being taken off.

ANTONY J. BLINKEN is a Paris-based writer.

Robb v. Wilder: the final battle.

TERMINATORS 2

By Fred Barnes

Keep two things in mind about Virginia's fratricidal Democrats, Senator Charles Robb and Governor Douglas Wilder. The first is that everything has come easy for Robb, but not for Wilder. Robb, an instant celebrity as the spouse of Lynda Bird Johnson, started near the top. He was elected lieutenant governor in 1977 in his first stab at elective office. Wilder, a black, plotted for years to become influential, an insider, in the legislature. He succeeded, a stupendous feat in the 1970s South. Then he fought off almost as many Democrats as Republicans to become lieutenant governor in 1985 and the nation's first black governor in 1989. The second thing stems from the first. Robb, rarely under pressure, never developed sharp political skills. Wilder did.

Also crucial to understanding why Robb and Wilder have spent most of 1991 at each other's throat is the grudge Wilder nurses against Robb. (It is not, as many claim, the presidential ambitions that each has—or had.) Wilder's resentment is understandable. He is smarter, shrewder, a better speaker, far more charming, and considerably more adept at dealing with the press. Yet he had to step aside and let Robb take statewide offices before he got a shot at them. When his main chance came, he had to seize what Robb was handed. Democrats panted for Robb to run for governor in 1981 and senator in 1988. When Wilder announced for lieutenant governor and then governor, they panicked. Robb and his allies were among those who feared massive defeat. They lined up with Wilder reluctantly, only after alternatives evaporated.

The current blow-up is, by my count, the fourth full-fledged fight between Robb and Wilder. That's on top of a half-dozen small skirmishes. This one began last winter when NBC News investigated Robb's alleged affair with a former Miss Virginia/USA, Tai Collins, and

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his partying in Virginia Beach at bashes where he witnessed cocaine use. The allegations, denied by Robb, weren't new. Versions of them surfaced in Virginia newspapers in 1987 and 1988, specifically that ten acquaintances of Robb were implicated in a drug trafficking probe. NBC also had Collins, on camera, saying Robb had sex with her at the Pierre Hotel in New York in 1984. Robb and his staff declared that Wilder was the source of revived allegations. In a letter last March to Tom Brokaw of NBC, he declared that Wilder and his aides "promoted the story" about Robb's personal life.

Robb had reason to believe this. His office had obtained a tape of a telephone conversation in October 1988 in which Wilder talked about Robb's alleged misconduct. The senator's office might have released the tape just after the NBC show to get the press off Robb's case and on Wilder's. But cooler heads prevailed. Instead it was recognized that exploiting a tape of a private phone chat might violate the law (it does, the Virginia attorney general's office decided later). Besides, the tape didn't help Robb. It focused on Wilder's charge that state police were forced to drop a drug and gambling investigation once Robb was placed at parties where drugs were used. (Robb wasn't a suspect.) Wilder insisted on the tape that "Robb is finished" politically. Of course, Robb wasn't; he was elected to the Senate the next month.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Following the NBC segment on Robb, another flap erupted. It was over a state police inquiry to discover whether two people who criticized Robb on the show had been threatened afterward by the Robb camp. Robb never said so directly, but he and his aides suspected that Wilder was behind the investigation. Wilder denied this. The flap wouldn't die. A legislative committee and the State Crime Commission said they would look into the propriety of the police probe. Finally Wilder, during a trip to Europe, managed to change the subject. He'd learned of the tape. So in an interview with Don Baker of *The Washington Post*, he said that conversations on a cellular phone in his state limousine had been bugged. The secret tape of his chats had been passed to Robb, he said.

Robb had no choice but to confirm the existence of the tape. At least two reporters had either heard it or gotten transcripts. One reporter told Robb the tape came from his office. Robb said he'd never listened to the tape and that it had been destroyed after sitting in a safe for more than two years. (This was no easier to believe than Robb's earlier explanation that he had sipped wine with Collins in a hotel room in his bathrobe and had been massaged by her—but that the intimacy had stopped there.) The *Post* ran excerpts from a transcript of the tape. It also made clear that its reporter had actually heard the recording. "Wilder's high-pitched cackle almost jumps off the page," Baker and Kent Jenkins Jr. wrote.

At this point, the feud took on a life of its own. State Attorney General Mary Sue Terry ordered an investigation of the taping and called in the FBI. Robb put three top staffers on administrative leave and ordered his own internal investigation. Wilder could have backed off and watched Robb clumsily try to wriggle out of trouble. Instead he decided to pile on. He complained in a written statement that he "joins those citizens who have been victims of a crime and have seen themselves put on trial." Wilder claimed that when he denounced the bugging and demanded an explanation, he was accused of "feuding." It's Robb who's feuding, he huffed, by falsely blaming Wilder for the NBC story and the state police inquiry. "Blaming the victim will not change the facts or excuse the conduct of Senator Robb and his staff in this eavesdropping incident," Wilder concluded.

But Wilder soon realized what Robb already knew: the fight made both of them look like clowns. Robb was getting the worst of it, but Wilder looked petty and vindictive. Talking by phone, they agreed to a truce. Their strategy for putting the fight behind them—to contend it never occurred—was scarcely credible, but they plunged ahead. The feud was a concoction of the

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press, Robb told reporters. He said the war that never happened "is over." Robb and Wilder met a gaggle of reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington on June 18. Robb said there was a "perception" of a feud. Wilder said, "I don't think there was any attempt by Chuck Robb to do anything to me." Except wring your neck, governor.

In one sense Wilder was hurt more than Robb. His immediate ambitions are higher. He wants to run for president but isn't finding much support. If he'd played his hand better, Wilder could have had Robb as an active backer. More important, he could have had the entire Virginia Democratic apparatus—Robb, former Governor Gerald Baliles, and their allies all over Virginia—on his side. They'd have to support a favorite son for president, so long as he hadn't publicly alienated them. Wilder has, so he'll never get their support now.

And other Democrats who've watched how Wilder treats his supposed friends in Virginia may be leery. He is an obsessive grudge-bearer. He trashed Baliles, Virginia's best governor in modern times, after succeeding him in office. In fact Wilder is the one constant in the fifteen or twenty scraps in Virginia politics in the past fifteen years. If there's a fight, Wilder is nearly always a combatant. Wilder wins most of the fights. For instance, his friend Patricia Kluge, then wife of billionaire (and Wilder fund-raiser) John Kluge, wanted desperately to be on the University of Virginia board of visitors. The board resisted; Kluge is a high school dropout, after all. Wilder appointed her anyway.

Robb's problem is that he's a political klutz. There's a rule in politics when you're caught in a personal scandal: don't discuss details. Not only did Robb submit to a two-hour interview with an aggressive NBC producer, he then released the seventy-nine-page transcript filled with details, including ones left out of the NBC show. Robb was reduced to sputtering to the producer's final question about whether he'd ever told a lie. "No, I, I, I'm telling you. Let, let me just, 'cause I, I, I . . ." In his spats with Wilder, Robb is always on defense, Wilder on offense. In 1982 Wilder bullied Robb into dropping his first choice for the Democratic Senate nomination, Owen Pickett. In this year's feud, Wilder made Robb's office the target of a criminal investigation.

Now Robb's chances of being on the national Democratic ticket—ever—are practically nil. That's unfortunate. Robb, as good at policy as he is bad at politics, is a natural leader of moderate Democrats. He backed the Gulf war, and is a Senate force on foreign and defense issues. He would have made a credible national candidate. My guess is that his biggest trouble will be getting re-elected in 1994. Republicans don't have a prime candidate to run, but there's a potential Democratic challenger, Wilder. He'll be out of office (Virginia governors can't succeed themselves) and looking for work. And what he's best at, it turns out, is carving up Chuck Robb. ●

Don't silence RFE and NED.

VOICE LESSONS

By Morton Kondracke

Two of the U.S. government's wisest overseas outlays go to independent organizations not subject to direct bureaucratic control: the Board for International Broadcasting, which runs Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty with a budget of $200 million a year, and the National Endowment for Democracy, which channels $20 million a year to labor unions, think tanks, newspapers, and political organizations in unfree or semi-free countries. The "radios," as they're known in the trade, operate separately from the U.S. government so that they can broadcast stories that might not be totally in tune with White House foreign policy—such as interviews with Mikhail Gorbachev's critics in the Soviet Union and minute-by-minute coverage of the Soviet government's brutal crackdown in Lithuania last January.

Similarly, NED's independence allows it to give money to exiled Chinese democrats (about $400,000 this year), even though the Bush administration is trying to stay cozy with Beijing. Over the last eight years NED and its constituent groups have funded labor organizers in South Korea, election monitors in the Philippines and Taiwan, and various dissident groups in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and Latin America, often to the displeasure of local regimes.

Despite past good work that has received lavish praise from such democratic heroes as Czechoslovakia's Vaclav Havel and Poland's Lech Walesa, both BIB and NED are facing threats to their existence and independence. The U.S. Information Agency wants to take over BIB and turn its radios into mouthpieces of the U.S. government, and a disparate group of House members wants to eliminate NED and have its functions performed by the USIA or the Agency for International Development, which are more minutely subject to congressional direction.

On May 15 the House came within thirty-five votes of passing an amendment by Democratic Representative Paul Kanjorski, a coalfields isolationist from Pennsylvania, to slash NED's budget in half. The measure had the support of a majority of Democrats. On June 13 NED supporters pulled the endowment's authorization bill off the floor in order to avoid another attack, led this time by Representative William Gray, who blames NED for the administration's delay in spending a congressionally approved grant of $10 million to buy vehicles and equipment for political organizations in South Africa, of which $4 million would go to the African National Congress and $1 million to its bitter rival, the Zulu Inkatha movement.

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Gray argues that Poland's Solidarity got no-strings-attached U.S. aid and so should the ANC—despite the fact that Solidarity was dedicated to nonviolence and the ANC, as yet, is not.

Despite powerful Democratic friends, including Representatives Dante Fascell, Les Aspin, Stephen Solarz, David McCurdy, and Howard Berman, NED has aroused the ire of other influential members. One of them is David Obey, the House subcommittee chairman who controls appropriations for foreign operations including AID but not NED. NED supporters say that Obey and his staff want to micromanage NED functions through AID. Obey says that's not true and that he simply regards NED President Carl Gershman as "arrogant." However, were NED eliminated and AID put exclusively in charge of democracy promotion, it's a fair bet that if China, the Soviet Union, or an Arab nation complained that organizing or publishing by a grantee was "subversive," a flap would ensue—followed by cool-it instructions from the State Department.

That kind of thing happens fairly often at the Voice of America, a U.S. government agency subordinate to the USIA and State. When the VOA labeled Saddam Hussein a terrorist in 1990 and Saddam complained, a top aide to Secretary of State James Baker told the VOA to quit being provocative. The VOA was established as the official voice of the United States and is required to support its foreign policy. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, by contrast, can say what they want as long as it is not inconsistent with U.S. policy—a seemingly small but operationally significant difference. And whereas VOA devotes much of its airtime to news from America, RFE and RL report on events in the countries to which they broadcast.

With the cold war over, it's argued, there is a fading need for independent broadcasting to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. President Bush has appointed a commission to look into future roles and missions for various broadcast agencies, but it's clear that USIA covets RFE's and RL's facilities, budget, and research arm. The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, which oversees USIA, called last month for phasing-out RFE broadcasts to Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia and "consolidation of U.S. radio and television operations, wherever possible, within a government structure." In March the president signed a directive prepared by White House aides indicating that the VOA should eventually pick up RFE's and RL's functions.

Instead of grabbing these independent agencies and turning them into bureaucracies, Congress and the president ought to figure out how to transfer and expand their activities. When full democracy is secure in Eastern Europe, RFE perhaps should be privatized and turned over to the countries involved. That moment has not yet arrived, however, and the leaders of newly free nations want RFE to stay. In fact, it is being given AM frequencies and listenership is expanding. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union is a long way from free, and the same is true for other nations. Instead of closing down independent broadcasting, the United States should create a Radio Free China, Radio Free Africa, and Radio Free Arabia. And instead of strangling NED, Congress ought to expand it. ●

Lights out for the Soviet CP.

BEDTIME STORY

By Gabriel Schoenfeld

"We are guilty before the working class," Mikhail Gorbachev confessed to a gathering of Moscow Communists last November. The elections in the Russian republic suggest that most Russians agree with him. The only people for whom electoral defeat came as a surprise are the stupefied Communists themselves.

A mass exodus from the Communist Party's ranks is now under way. As of January 1990, according to Tass, the Party had 19.2 million members, but membership dropped to 16.9 million by January 1991. This year the Party is shrinking even more rapidly. In the first quarter of 1991 more than half a million Communists quit. In the Komsomol, the Party's junior league, membership has fallen from 42 million in 1988 to just 24 million as of mid-February.

In a February opinion survey conducted by the Communist Party's Academy of Social Sciences and reported in *Pravda*, 1,600 Party members from eight republics were questioned about their attitudes toward the Party. The results include good news—the majority of Communists remain faithful to the Party's "ideals and its noble goals," and a full 63 percent of respondents believe that the Communist Party is able to lead the society out of its crisis. Nearly three-quarters of those polled declared their "full intention to remain in the CPSU," up from November 1990, when only 66 percent were planning to stay. The pollsters found that "certain positive improvements in the mood of Communists have begun to show."

But they also found a few lost souls in the ranks, especially among those who no longer receive the kind of reverence in the workplace they once had by right. Campaigns are under way to limit the activity of the ubiquitous Communist cells, or to allow non-Communist parties to play a commensurate role. Those left have become whipping boys for everything that goes wrong—and the stress on once-flattered petty authoritarians is increasing. Nearly a third claimed to suffer from "psychological discomfort" because colleagues in their workplaces "are ill-disposed toward Communists and 'pressure' them."

The right "of a person to be a Communist is often trampled on," complained Gennady Veselkov, the deputy chairman of the Party's Central Control Commission to the newspaper *Rabochaya Tribuna* (Workers' Tribune). Communists are "frequently persecuted for their ideological beliefs, relieved of their posts for no

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other reason, and face obstacles in their attempts to find jobs." In a late conversion to the Helsinki accords, Tass also recently complained that attempts to ban Communist Party organizations are in violation of "international human rights conventions." A new Soviet law attempts to set things right. It stipulates that Party members can engage in political activity when "their members are off work and the organization's own resources are used to cover the expenses."

In the ideological realm, six years of ever shifting pronouncements from the Kremlin have left Communists with considerable spiritual angst. Many Party members are disoriented by the task of reconciling "a Communist perspective" with those Party documents that call for "recognition of private property, especially of land." It would help a great deal, suggests *Pravda*'s report on the opinion poll, if this problem were addressed by the "scholars and ideologists of the CPSU." Eighty-three percent of Communists expressed a desire for "Party discipline" to be reinforced. According to *Pravda*, the poll shows that what would help members most is a "clear political line" and "reference points" from the Central Committee.

Pravda's commentary on the survey also sheds light on a range of other internal flaws. The constant shuffling of personnel and renaming of departments in local Communist organizations is making it hard for local organizers to keep track of their flock. Local Party leaders, reports the newspaper, "have simply no time left for going . . . and meeting the Communists." The reinvigoration of the local soviets makes for another problem. Not long ago these were rubber-stamp bodies, but now in many localities they carry real weight. The Communist Party, says *Pravda*, "still has not overcome its shock from the loss of its former absolute power." There is also a "shortage of quality leaders" at the local level. It is only with the "greatest difficulty that we are overcoming the legacy of an authoritative-bureaucratic system that . . . relegates obedient mediocrities to leading posts."

If down below the Party is hemorrhaging, at its upper reaches it is experiencing a crisis of a different sort. The once monolithic organization is fracturing and turning on itself. The Russian election results have only intensified this process. "If we occupy ourselves with cannibalism in the Party ranks," Gorbachev told Communist apparatchiks at the Party's April plenum, "then this will be a massive gift to all those who want our Communist Party to lose its strength and influence. . . ." But it is ever more probable that such a "gift" will be delivered. Within and around the Communist Party, numerous subgroups are organizing their own platforms and movements.

Communist fundamentalists who follow Nina Andreeva, the notorious author of the "Manifesto of Anti-Perestroika Forces," have formed Edinstvo, an orthodox Stalinist caucus that favors re-Bolshevizing the CPSU. The platform of another group, the United Workers' Front, denounces Gorbachev's policies as "right-opportunist, capitulationist, ruinous for the Party." The Marxist Workers Party has split with the CPSU because it is "swaying toward the bourgeois path." The Proletarian Communist Party of the USSR operates clandestinely; its program is unknown. The largest and most vigorous congregation of hard-liners is in the Russian Communist Party. Their program is simple: defend the old order; save whatever can be saved. In defeat, some of the Russian Communists are thinking of going underground. Aleksandr Grishchenko, a Central Committee member from Kemerovo oblast, says that it is "necessary to get away to the taiga and become partisans to win back Soviet power." Kemerovo may become "guerrilla country," reports Radio Rossiya.

Reformist Communists also are speaking out and organizing, trying to salvage Karl Marx's great idea. Democratic Unity, Horizontal Structures, Young Communists, and Marxism XXI are just some of the groups that stand for liberalizing the CPSU from within. Aleksandr Rutskoy, Boris Yeltsin's vice presidential running mate, is one of the most visible leaders of the new brand of do-goodniks. "I am a proponent of the renewal of the Communist Party," he proclaims. With his belief in compromise, dialogue, and a "round table" that encompasses all points of view, Rutskoy could be drawing his political creed from Roger Fisher's *Getting to Yes*. But like the other Communist reform movements, Rutskoy's new parliamentary grouping, Communists for Democracy, occupies a treacherously narrow spot on the Soviet political divide. Redundant, say critics from the orthodox old guard—the Communist Party is already democratic. An oxymoron, say non-Communist outsiders—democrats who believe in communism are the equivalent of Christians who worship the devil.

In some ways, the unreconstructed faith of the hard-liners is the most effective way of surviving change. They don't have to assimilate the democratic transition. They can merely fulminate against it. Anatoly Malofeyev, head of the Communist Party in Byelorussia, sees the hand of the class enemy at work in the current morass. "Anti-socialist forces," he asserted at the recent plenum, are trying to destroy the USSR by "highly impudent, highly illegal means." But all is not lost. The 28th Communist Party Congress, he said, described what kind of society the Communists are still constructing: "We are renewing socialism and making it attractive to people. I think it is inadmissible to deviate from the Party's general course." Others sound less desperately convinced, more wistfully confused. Ivan Polozkov, head of the Russian Communist Party, sees the root of the problem as a kind of Carteresque malaise: "When perestroika was proclaimed, people believed in something better. They believed in the Party. Does anyone seriously think we can build anything or go anywhere in our country without faith, without lofty, spiritual, guiding stars?" True, maybe. But for the vast majority of Soviet subjects—even some of the Communists—the Communist star is no longer one of them.

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Nowhere to go but up.

THE CASE AGAINST NASA

By Gregg Easterbrook

Conventional wisdom holds that in the days of the moon race, the space program was exorbitantly expensive. Actually, measured by achievement, it was cheap. For the inflation-adjusted price of the forty space shuttle flights so far, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration could have launched 150 Apollo missions to the Moon. Can't believe that space used to cost less? Test-fire this statistic: during the Moon race, NASA's fanciest rocket put payload in orbit at about $1,700 per pound in current dollars. Today the comparable figure for the space shuttle is about $11,600 a pound.

Recent U.S. space history contains one lapse after another: Challenger, *the Hubble telescope, the antenna failure that imperils the Galileo probe bound for Jupiter. Next winter NASA will reach a new low when it launches the costly GOES-NEXT weather satellite, which the agency* already knows *to be defective. But the most fundamental NASA problem is that every year the United States spends more to accomplish less in space.*

This situation can be changed. There are many affordable, beneficial, and important things that can be done in space if only NASA truly were reformed. Here's a guide to how:

BOOSTERS The single greatest handicap of the space program is NASA's insistence on doing nearly everything via the space shuttle—a flying machine that is technologically impressive, visually enthralling, and fiscally nonsensical. Reusable spaceships sound cheap in theory, and someday they may be in fact. For the moment they are more expensive than the old throwaway boosters. The Saturn V, which powered *Apollo* to the Moon, cost $415 million per launch (all money figures in this article have been converted to current dollars) and put 250,000 pounds of payload in space. The shuttle now costs at least $515 million per launch and carries 48,000 pounds of cargo to space. The shuttle program was originally justified as one that would cut the cost of access to space to $400 per pound, meaning that on the key item for an efficient space program—boost cost to orbit—the shuttle is twenty-seven times more expensive than NASA predicted. The Soviet Union, with less than half the economic output of the United States, conducts on average seven times as many annual space launches mainly by using "big, dumb boosters," not max-tech hardware. The USSR's primary manned booster, the SL4, costs about $900 per pound of payload.

NASA resists ideas for new rockets because if any cheap booster were built, the shuttle's funding would be threatened. That would mean not only astronauts out of work, but also fewer jobs in the agency's manned flight centers, where there are several hundred support employees for each skywalker.

The U.S. space inventory contains some unmanned boosters that are less expensive than the shuttle, but nowhere near as cheap as they might be. All were conceived in the 1950s as military ICBMs: their designs embody assumptions from what is now space engineering's Stone Age. A combination of "dumb" design (using the least cost, not the highest-tech solution to any problem) and engineering breakthroughs has made throwaway rockets steadily cheaper since the 1950s: the powerful MX costs *less* than the old Atlas ICBM. But the civilian space program has not benefited from such advances. The United States has designed just one rocket specifically as a space booster, the Saturn. Saturns were advanced in some aspects, dumb in others: the first stage fuel was kerosene. Saturn is the only rocket built by any country to have achieved a flawless operating record. Yet NASA couldn't wait to get it out of production in the 1970s, because its continued existence would have embarrassed the shuttle.

BRITISH ADMIRALTY, NASA AS In 1964 NASA had 1,477 employees per space mission launched. By 1974 the figure had risen to 1,625. In 1984 there were 1,823. Last year there were 2,953 employees per launch. This blo[illegible]as occurred during a period when computers have revolutionized the efficiency of technical operations and knowledge of space flight has increased. Today it ought to be elementary to launch missions with fewer people, not more. Imagine any private company trying to compete with twice as many workers per product as in 1964.

CHALLENGER: THE SEQUEL The 1990 Augustine Commission called a second shuttle tragedy "likely" unless most

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flights are replaced with throwaway boosters. There may be some causes in space worth dying for. Can releasing a data relay satellite (*Challenger*'s mission) really be one of them?

When a space shuttle fails on a mere satellite launch, not only are precious human lives lost, but billions in hardware and one-quarter of the nation's space fleet vanish too, and the entire space program goes into suspension. These things do not happen when a throwaway rocket, never expected back in the first place, malfunctions.

NASA continues to repeat the mistakes that led to the *Challenger* disaster. Despite the shuttle's vaunted new "escape mechanism," there is still no possibility astronauts could survive a repeat of the failure in the solid-rocket motor that destroyed *Challenger*, or of an uncontrolled emergency in the main engines, which have nearly miscarried on several ascents. The escape mechanism can be used only after all five motors have been safely shut off; and after the shuttle, otherwise undamaged, has been steered back to low altitude and slowed down. This covers only a small percentage of shuttle calamity scenarios.

NASA's current administrator, Richard Truly, is an ex-shuttle pilot. Unlike some past administrators, he is an able and dedicated leader. "But Truly sees his task as to protect the astronaut's franchise and increase shuttle funding on his watch," said a member of a recent space commission. "He can't talk about anything but shuttle, shuttle, shuttle." The shuttle hard core constantly declares itself the last line of defense between the final frontier and the end of the manned space program. The truth is that the shuttle, soaking up all funds that might go to improved new launchers, is the greatest threat to manned space exploration. If another shuttle goes down in flames, Congress may cancel future operations, leaving the United States with no space transportation whatsoever.

ENVIRONMENTAL 'CRASH PROGRAM' NASA has a great-sounding $30 billion "crash program" to conduct environmental research, perhaps returning tangible benefit to taxpayers by answering charged political questions like whether global warming is real. Yet the first component of this effort, an Earth Observing System (EOS) satellite, is not scheduled for launch till 1998: and as more science funds are switched to space station subsidies, even that target date may slip, in NASA argot. EOS may take ten years from concept to "crash" launch—longer than the entire original Apollo program, from John Kennedy's challenge to Neil Armstrong's footprint.

Even for $30 billion, there are major omissions in the crash program. Variations in solar luminosity are a probable culprit in global temperature trends, but so far NASA is building no permanent spacecraft to collect badly needed data in this area. A solar-variability instrument will go up next year on a space shuttle, then come right back down. The device has been designed not as a permanent satellite but as a shuttle-bay fixture to be toted up every once in a blue moon, thus helping justify the shuttle but guaranteeing no data base broad enough to determine much of anything about solar luminosity trends.

And did you know that the most Earth-like planet in our solar system, Venus, has a carbon dioxide atmosphere with a runaway greenhouse effect? NASA seems not to. Though many public dollars are being spent on Magellan, the spacecraft that is radar-mapping Venus's surface—a project of intense interest to geology graduate students and meaningless to the person in the street—NASA has no plans to fire probes into the Venusian atmosphere, to determine if what went wrong there has any application to the earthly greenhouse debate.

FLETCHER, JAMES The NASA Rasputin. Fletcher was the agency's administrator during the Nixon administration, when the original disastrous shuttle decisions were made. One was the claim that shuttles would be cheaper than throwaway rockets, widely known to be a fiction within NASA at the time. The other disastrous Fletcher decision was to steer a contract to Morton Thiokol for the solid rockets that failed on *Challenger*—though Thiokol was the only bidder that proposed an engine with no safety system.

After *Challenger* exploded, Ronald Reagan called Fletcher back to be NASA boss again. Fletcher took on as his next cause space station Freedom and is now the godfather of NASA's second deeply misguided program. By first kidding themselves and the public about space shuttle costs, then kidding themselves again about the practicality of the space station, NASA managers began to transform the nature of the agency. NASA made mistakes during the 1960s, but generally its operations were characterized by honesty and openness. The reward was glory. Since Fletcher taught the agency institutional self-deception, failures and derision have been its companions.

In the aftermath of *Challenger*—when NASA as an institution was stunned and briefly open to change—Reagan sent the worst possible message first by bringing back a crony in Fletcher, then by raising NASA's budget, signaling the agency that it would be rewarded rather than punished for failure. The budget has continued to increase as operations decline; NASA had the federal government's fastest-growing appropriation in the first Bush budgets, though under Bush it has not managed even to match its depressed pre-*Challenger* launch rate.

FREEDOM: WHAT'S IT FOR? As announced by Reagan in 1984, Freedom was to be equipped for satellite repair, assembly and fueling of outbound spacecraft, astronomy, environmental studies, microgravity manufacturing, and research into the human body's response to space. As of 1991 all missions except the final two have been eliminated, and the second-to-last is on the verge of elimination. (See MANUFACTURING IN SPACE.)

Satellite repair is out because it's rarely practical, and it's usually cheaper to launch a new satellite than to repair an existing model. Astronomy and environmental studies have been eliminated to cut costs. As-

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sembly and fueling of spacecraft have been cut for technical reasons. Meanwhile, in order for the space station to be shuttle-built and shuttle-serviced—NASA's budget is constructed so that the station and the shuttle justify each other—Freedom will have to float in a low orbit, because the shuttle has an unusually low altitude limit. The station will revolve just slightly below the altitude at which drag from the boundary of the atmosphere stops, meaning its orbit will degrade and the whole facility will require periodic reboosting. Of course, that gives the shuttle something to do.

Also deleted from the original plan was a "closed" life-support system in which oxygen, water, and nitrogen would be reused. As closed life-support is a requirement for Mars travel, and no such system has ever been built, this was to be the station's primary new technological achievement. Now the life-cycle will be "open," meaning essentials will be hauled up from Earth, increasing costs while decreasing knowledge gained. Further dropped was the idea of equipping Freedom with solar-dynamic mirrors, which promise an improvement over conventional photo-cell power panels. A solar-dynamic power system might have provided clues about whether energy collected in space will ever be useful on the ground.

Freedom's remaining purpose, research on human response to space, is a valid objective. Nearly all of this, however, could just as well be done on shuttles, in the life-sciences module called Spacelab that just went to orbit in Columbia's payload bay. The existence of Spacelab has been a budgetary complication to NASA: the agency is accordingly erasing many planned Spacelab flights from the shuttle manifest.

Some life-science experiments require extended stays in space, and the shuttle has a limit of about ten days. But this problem could be overcome far more cheaply with technical upgrades for the shuttle than by building a space station. Such upgrades could allow shuttles bearing the life-science lab to remain spaceborn for about a month. This "long-duration orbiter" proposal has been fought with fury by NASA for a decade, since it defoliates the sole remaining space station argument. There is now a sort-of LDO plan on NASA's chart, but one with calculated limitations to prevent direct competition with Freedom.

Finally, there are extended-stay life-science experiments, which could not be conducted even on a long-duration orbiter. The trouble is, extended life-science experiments have been the focus of the existing Soviet Mir space station program. Soviet officials have released considerable data from their findings, and have indicated they might share more. Freedom would largely duplicate tests already conducted. Though spending much less than the United States, the USSR has had a space station in operation since 1984—which suggests the kinds of things a space program can accomplish without busting the national budget, if its cost structure is in touch with reality.

FREEDOM: WHAT'S THE PRICE? When NASA proposed the space station in 1984, the basic construction price was put at $11 billion. Today, with the station shrunk to half its former size and nearly all features deleted, NASA admits the price is $30 billion. The GAO says $40 billion. Once the overruns set in, what will the real number be? Since agency managers clearly lied about the 1984 figures—three times the cost for half the size is not an honest mistake—Congress should assume that NASA continues to lie even about the recent inflated estimates. The more significant figure is $118 billion, the GAO estimate of what Freedom will cost once operating expenses are included. That number represents sixty years of funding for the National Science Foundation.

FREEDOM: WILL IT WORK? The station is already on its fifth design overhaul. "This is the most screwed-up project I've ever been associated with" is the line heard from every NASA and contractor station official who talks off the record. Technical worries about Freedom turn on its launch packaging and maintenance. The first U.S. space station, Skylab, went up in 1973 as a single unit, no assembly required. So that components can be launched aboard the shuttle, Freedom is being designed in small units that will require twenty-three to twenty-six shuttle flights for delivery, and in-space assembly far more complex than any ever attempted. (Saturn Vs, if they still existed, could launch Freedom in five flights.) Suppose another shuttle fails during the construction period, and launches undergo the kind of lengthy suspension that followed *Challenger*. The Freedom design can withstand one to two years of flight suspensions without falling back into the atmosphere. Downtime after *Challenger* was three years.

And because of all the component package assemblies necessary to cross-justify the shuttle, Freedom will require an unprecedented degree of maintenance. Last year NASA tried to suppress an internal report estimating Freedom may need 2,200 hours per year of spacewalk time for maintenance; later the estimate rose to 3,700 hours. So far American astronauts have accumulated about 400 total hours walking in space, and they found the experience profoundly exhausting. Under the current estimate, each member of Freedom's four-person crew would spend two hours per day spacewalking with wrench and hammer. In other words, the main purpose of being on the space station will be to maintain the space station.

GOES-NEXT Yes, NASA will deliberately launch this defective weather satellite (several of its high-tech sensors are less proficient than your dog's nose), because the existing U.S. weather satellite network is down to a single spacecraft that may fail soon, so an underachieving replacement is better than nothing.

The GOES-NEXT program is NASA decline in a nutshell. NASA began launching weather satellites in 1960; building these spacecraft well and quickly has never been a problem before. But GOES-NEXT has been under prepa-

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ration since 1984 and still doesn't work. Its price tag has increased from $372 million to $1.2 billion. NASA apologists recently told *The New York Times* that GOES-NEXT is defective because of "penny pinching." Uh-huh. Commercial spacecraft manufacturers, subject to cost discipline, now make top-line communications satellites for about $100 million each, with two-year delivery. And they work.

HARWOOD, OLIVER Former Rockwell space station engineer [illegible]hiered in the late 1980s after he published an article in a technical journal describing how the station could be assembled more cheaply. Harwood, who supports the idea of station funding, objects to Freedom on the grounds that it is a "configured" facility composed of specially designed units that serve unique functions. This ensures high cost, as vast numbers of special parts must be fabricated. Once the configured units are locked together, it will be difficult to adapt Freedom to any new use: should someone actually dream up a valid purpose for a space station, Freedom may not be able to accommodate it.

Harwood proposed an evolutionary design in which mass-produced Tinkertoy pieces are joined as required, cutting costs while allowing Freedom to be expanded when necessary. NASA engineers raise technical objections to the concept, but at bottom the agency's complaint is that it would transfer design fiefdom authority from the headquarters types who now specify configuration packages. Contractors hate the idea because the mass-manufactured modular pieces could be competitively bid. Projects with one-of-a-kind components are ideal for pie-dividing among the usual gang of suspects, with most slices "negotiated" (effectively no-bid) because it's gratifyingly hard to figure out what special-order components should cost.

Harwood's experience suggests why, compared with today's NASA, the Department of Defense drives a hard bargain. In normal free enterprise, companies compete to cut costs and improve products: if there were a race on to build commercial space stations, firms would be flocking to the mass-manufactured concept. In government contracting the customer creates the specifications. And if the customer has specified a needlessly expensive system, why should the contractor point that out?

The Pentagon sometimes works around this problem through "flyoffs"—issuing general performance criteria, then letting contractors make their own design [illegible]e-offs as they assemble competing prototypes. Reliable and cost-effective flying machines such as the F-16 and F-18 fighters have been created this way. In contrast, expensive lemons such as the B-1 bomber result when Pentagon planners "configure" a proposal, then work exclusively with one contractor on a negotiated basis.

Harwood believes that even considering the funds sunk into Freedom so far, NASA could save money by junking all existing drawings, issuing performance criteria, and letting contractors duke it out to see which can devise the cheapest new design. This would delay the station's christening—but that would be great. Another several years down the road an affordable shuttle alternative might exist (see NATIONAL LAUNCH SYSTEM), enabling the station to be launched sanely.

INDUSTRIAL SPACE FACILITY In the late Reagan administration, when space station funding seemed likely to falter, former NASA chief designer Max Faget proposed an automated space station that would be "man tended"—astronauts would visit occasionally—but not crewed. Faget said he could raise half the cost from private sources; NASA's share of the project would be $800 million.

The idea of the space station alternative costing perhaps 1 percent as much as Freedom somehow failed to engage NASA's imagination. The agency bitterly denounced the idea; James Fletcher told Congress there was no commercial market for ISF-carried experiments. Out of the other side of his mouth, Fletcher was praising the vast commercial potential of Freedom. Today the facility sits as no more than a "requested" shuttle manifest assignment for 1997, long after the big Freedom funding will be safely in the pipeline.

'MANNED' FLIGHT, GLAMOUR OF NASA managers are fond of saying that only a manned program can keep the public interested in space flight. Met anybody lately who's turned on by the glamour of deploying the SYNCON-5 satellite, which is what *Columbia* did last year? How 'bout that stirring *Discovery* mission to release the MORELOS-A relay unit and to monitor an experiment in slipcasting? The Soviets have been putting people into space like crazy, and their program does not exactly ooze sex appeal. The argument that people make space interesting—especially the automatons NASA turns out—is a budget-justifier's fantasy. Accomplishments and knowledge are what excite the public about space. The public has good instincts for when people are doing significant or courageous things in space, when merely punching the clock. Good public instincts in this regard are one reason NASA now takes so much flak.

MANUFACTURING IN SPACE For years NASA has rhapsodized about the potential to grow industrial crystals and medicines in orbit. Complication: science has signed off this idea. The National Academy of Sciences and Bush's own science adviser, D. Allan Bromley, have said microgravity research on the station has little or no scientific justification. Donald Burnett, a professor at the California Institute of Technology, recently chaired a scientific panel whose duties included inventing microgravity experiments for the station. "We basically just couldn't come up with anything," Burnett said.

Scientists dislike the station for microgravity research because automated satellites could accomplish the same task at a fraction of the expense, freeing R&D money for more productive uses. Also, people bumping around in a space station will prevent microgravity experiments from being carried out in (relative) motionlessness.

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Free enterprise has also lost interest in microgravity manufacturing, because the high cost of shuttle operations makes it economic suicide. The NASA launch cost now works out to $725 per ounce, meaning any material manufactured in space would have to sell for several times that to be profitable. Orbital alchemy, for one, would be a big loser at these prices, gold currently trading at $370 per ounce.

Some planners tried to work around shuttle costs by suggesting that discoveries could be made in space experiments; the profitable manufacturing done on the ground. One idea held that in microgravity the three-dimensional structures of important human proteins would unscrunch sufficiently that they could be patterned for analysis down below. This is, in fact, a promising field of inquiry—so promising that researchers are already close to mastering dimensional protein analysis in Earthside labs. Between the high cost and long lead times of space-based R&D, private researchers will always have powerful incentives to make NASA commercial microgravity efforts archaic before they can be launched.

MARS George Bush, Dan Quayle, Richard Darman, and many others have said they want a manned Mars expedition. For reasons having to do with the zodiac of the planets, the years 2014-22 would be ideal for Mars travel: ideal in the physical alignment, not the Nancy Reagan sense. Planning would have to start soon.

Men and women surely will journey to Mars someday. For now, anyone who advocates Mars travel is living in a dream world. NASA has put the cost of a Mars landing at $400 billion, meaning the actual figure might be twice as high. A recent NASA study estimated that an "austere" Mars mission would require 2.2 million pounds of propellant at departure from Earth orbit. At current shuttle prices, merely launching that quantity of fuel—to say nothing of financing the Mars ships—would cost $25.7 billion, almost twice NASA's annual budget. Other obstacles, though surmountable in the long run, are equally high in the short run.

Last year some researchers at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory put together an idea for dramatically cutting the costs of Mars exploration by using spacecraft fashioned largely from inflatable components, not metals. Senior management at NASA went wild, not only because the Livermore plan cast light on NASA's new-idea shortage but because the lab, under supervision of the Department of Energy, seemed to be engaged in a long-feared guerrilla raid against NASA's space budget monopoly. NASA rallied supporters in Congress and had Livermore reprimanded for using tax funds to research a subject where the DOE has no statutory jurisdiction; researchers involved in the Livermore study got into deep career trouble for the sin of trying to cut space costs.

MEDIA NON-CONSPIRACY, THE "I've never seen a more compliant, unquestioning, obedient group in my life." Thus did a White House staffer describe the national press corps he observed at a recent shuttle launch. It is now widely acknowledged that a contributing factor in the *Challenger* tragedy was the boosterism of most journalists who cover the space program. In the aftermath coverage toughened briefly, but now it has mostly returned to the cozy old days. If another shuttle fails, there will be a second round of hand-wringing in which we wonder, Where were all the stories pointing out that the "escape mechanism" has almost no utility? Or the stories disclosing that after the *Challenger*, and against the advice of its own safety panels, NASA (under Fletcher, natch) committed itself to $2 billion for a new factory to build a new generation of "advanced" solid rockets that have the same fatal flaw as the Thiokol models—they cannot be shut off if something goes wrong.

Journalists traditionally have been press agents for space partly because of the dazzle factor—most have little idea what's going on other than that big light rise in sky—and partly because space is one area where people with conventional liberal credentials can show excitement over technology and the products of big corporate organizations without seeming like Tom Clancys.

NATIONAL LAUNCH SYSTEM Under pressure from Dan Quayle's Space Council, NASA announced it would build a new family of throwaway rockets to be called the National Launch System.

On paper the NLS sounds great—a big, dumb booster derived from existing components or new hardware that avoids complexity. For example, the NLS would have liquid-hydrogen engines only slightly less powerful than the shuttle main engines, but with a simplified internal structure involving hundreds fewer moving parts. Here's the problem: NASA says the NLS will take ten years and $12 billion to develop. In the early 1960s, when there were no CAD/CAM computers, the Saturn IB, similar in features and performance to the NLS, took four years and $4.2 billion to develop. NASA appears to be employing the reverse of the old low-ball gambit, overpricing the NLS so that the agency can claim it tried to construct a relatively cheap alternative to the shuttle but could not win backing from Congress.

PLAYERS Space common sense took a step backward when William Proxmire retired from the Senate in 1988. It's no coincidence that station Freedom funding prospects began to recover the following year. Though Proxmire's pronouncements sometimes had a "get a horse" quality, he provided a reality-check on spend requests. His chairmanship of the NASA appropriations subcommittee has passed to Barbara Mikulski, who has quickly shown herself a NASA mouthpiece, owing to her home state Maryland's status as fifth-ranking space spending beneficiary. The other key senator is Albert Gore Jr., who chairs the NASA authorizing subcommittee. Gore has shown interest in space process issues—was the Hubble mirror contract awarded properly?—but not in challenging NASA's status quo.

NASA's trump card in the House is Appropriations

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Committee chairman Jamie Whitten—the new shuttle solid-rocket motor factory is being built in Yellow Creek, Mississippi, Whitten's district. But perhaps the most distinctive House voice on space issues belongs to Robert Walker of Pennsylvania, a Newt Gingrich accomplice who simultaneously jeers at deficit spending and is a space station zealot. Walker is the one Tip O'Neill once exposed as gesturing madly to an empty House chamber during a cable TV performance. Walker joins Gus Savage of Illinois as the members of Congress r[illegible] likely to be in direct communication with alien star cruisers.

In Bush circles, Craig Fuller is a major space buff, as is Darman, who has with Gingrichian sagacity argued that somebody else ought to crack down on federal spending, yet unlimited billions for Mars travel is justified because the voyages would be "romantic."

QUAYLE Early in his tenure running space policy, Quayle indicated that he might show himself capable of creative leadership in this area. At this point, though, NASA is leading him around on a leash. Asked to cite any case in which Quayle has opposed an item from the NASA wish list, a White House staffer noted that the veep opposes Administrator Truly's request that shuttles six and seven be constructed. Not exactly political fearlessness. There is no chance that Congress, which just paid $2.5 billion for the fifth shuttle, *Endeavour*, will underwrite more of the same.

Quayle's space operative, National Space Council director Mark Albrecht, is full of ideas and enthusiasm but has little power because in every clash with NASA his boss has backed down. The Space Council itself is a weird operation. Staffers are known to call up journalists working on space stories and beg them Moonie-style not to criticize Quayle.

The major aerospace firms have made it known to Quayle that a test of his suitability for support in any future presidential run is whether he can deliver the mail in the two current areas where aerospace funding might increase—station Freedom and the National Aerospace Plane. (See SPACEPLANES, BIG.) A counter-influence has been retired General Daniel Graham and others associated with SDI advocacy. There's a contingent of the right that hates NASA because space screwups cast doubt on orbital shields: If we can't build weather satellites, who could trust Brilliant Pebbles? Graham has met with Quayle and urged him at least to stay out of the way of some anti-NASA ideas. (See STRATEGI[illegible]FENSE FACTOR.)

R&D ILLUSION, THE Space is widely assumed to be a "technology-driven" pursuit; Quayle has cited techno-competitiveness as a reason to build Freedom. In fact, since the shuttle designs were completed in the late 1970s, NASA has contributed little to technology. "You can debate the purpose of Star Wars, but nobody doubts that the SDI Organization, with one-third the budget of NASA, is producing more interesting new technology," said Bruce Murray, a former director of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Wander through mission control in Houston and you behold banks of flight controllers staring at screens. What do they see? Column after column of marching numbers being spat out by antiquated 1970s-style central processors. Watching for an important number is "like scanning the telephone book trying to spot a typo," says a NASA consultant familiar with the system. Modern computers could highlight any information needing attention, dropping insignificant data to the background. NASA has resisted this idea, partly because it would reduce the need for controllers.

Space R&D has declined because the bulk of NASA's appropriations now goes to shuttle subsidies. "During the old days NASA was good at doing new things, driven by technology," Murray says. "Now NASA mainly does shuttle operations, the kind of activity better left to private enterprise, while the flair for the new has been lost. And the big proposal is to bog NASA down in operations even further, by creating space station ops."

RUSSIANS The current station Freedom plan calls for cooperation with the NATO allies and the Japanese, but the nation we should really be coordinating space efforts with is the Soviet Union—which has something to offer. For example, if new life-science experiments are devised, they could be conducted jointly, at far lower cost, by "long-duration" U.S. shuttles flying formation with the Soviet station Mir.

SPACEPLANES, BIG In this category resides the National Aerospace Plane, NASP, intended to be a large space-faring machine that would rise from a runway like an airplane rather than blast off vertically.

In principle, the joint NASA-Air Force NASP is intriguing; someday something like it is bound to take flight. For today, NASP planning is shuttle redux—focused on a few huge machines that would carry both cargo and crew, engaging extreme cost and risk to human life for the dinkiest satellite launch or spy photo run. Essentially, the goal of the NASP project is to make a new space shuttle that's even more expensive and complicated than the existing one. Everything NASP is expected to do could be accomplished much more cheaply by dumb boosters or cheap "lightsat" reconnaissance satellites proposed by the Pentagon's DARPA R&D division. A NASP would probably require such items as a hypothetical motor called a "scramjet." No practical scramjet has ever been static-tested, much less flown.

When Richard Cheney took over as secretary of defense, one of his first moves was to cancel NASP: Quayle interceded to keep it alive. NASP proponents use a nostalgic space-race argument, saying that Britain and Germany will develop aerospace vehicles if we do not. They don't add that the British research effort involves an automated, unmanned craft; that Germany's project is now all but officially kaput.

SPACEPLANES, SMALL Not to be confused with NASP, a small spaceplane would be powered by conventional rocket

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engines and probably air-launched from a carrier aircraft such as a 747. The United States had such a spaceplane more than three decades ago, the X-15. This winged vehicle, dropped from a B-52, flew to the bottom of the thermosphere (though not into orbit) years before Yuri Gagarin became the first official man in space. Given that the successful X-15 was built before pocket calculators were invented, it should be no problem today to construct a larger model, perhaps able to carry a crew of six to eight.

Unlike the NASP, small spaceplanes are not plagued by expensive technological unknowns. The chief advantage is that the cheap, pedestrian jet engines of the carrier aircraft do most of the work of overcoming the vehicle's rest mass and moving it the first few miles skyward. The space-bound part of the system comes to life only at 30,000 feet. For technical reasons, rocket motors are less efficient than jet engines at cutting through dense low-altitude air but become extremely proficient in the upper atmosphere and in space. Thus an air-launched spaceplane would need only a fraction of the fuel and tankage required of the gargantuan shuttle, making the vehicle smaller and cheaper.

The problem from NASA's corporate perspective is that spaceplanes cannot be made large enough to carry both crew and heavy cargo. The most basic way to rationalize the U.S. space program would be to have new, dumb boosters for launching bulk; new, small spaceplanes for people only, on those missions where people truly are required. Such an arrangement would make access to space far more practical, but would eliminate the current assumption that a flying dreadnought and numerous astronauts must go along on even the most routine satellite launch. Thus, NASA opposition.

STRATEGIC DEFENSE FACTOR No space-based defenses will ever be practical unless the price of access to orbit is cut dramatically. Therefore the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization is at present doing more research into launcher innovations than NASA. Unlike NASA, Star Wars is under cost discipline. One SDI idea is a "single stage to orbit" vehicle (SSTO). Since the early 1970s a California engineer named Gary Hudson has carried on a lonely crusade for an SSTO, which the aerospace establishment considered an impossibility. A few years ago Max Hunter, a mad-genius type who designed the Thor ICBM and several NASA projects and then became active in the High Frontier SDI group, seized on SSTO as an answer to the steep cost of space. Hunter gave the idea instant credibility. Unfortunately, Hudson also believes the SSTO should be built by private enterprise without government support—a deeply subversive idea to the aerospace community—so he continues to be an outsider.

The SSTO would be a Buck Rogers rocket: blasting off for space as a single unit with no stages dropping away, then returning to land vertically with motors firing in reverse. The benefits would be simplicity, no reassembly after use, and nothing wasted. The idea has the same drawback as the small spaceplane—there's no practical way to make an SSTO that would carry both crew and heavy cargo. So this idea too makes NASA nervous, because it's likely there will never be an SSTO as big or as expensive as the shuttle.

SKYLAB The first U.S. space station, orbited in 1973. So far $5.6 billion has been spent merely planning station Freedom. The entire cost of Skylab—construction, launch, and operation—was $7.5 billion. Skylab, proposed by an ad hoc coalition of agency mavericks and fashioned from a spare Saturn upper stage, was a triumph of the old NASA can-do spirit. By the end of the third visit, however, Skylab mission planners were already having difficulty figuring out what any subsequent crews might do. Much to NASA's institutional relief, Skylab fell back into the atmosphere in 1979. It could have been reboosted to a secure orbit, but from there would only have mocked the Freedom budget requests.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE? Unlike some public issues, space is not critical; should GOES-NEXT or Galileo fail, life will go on. But space is a symbol of government's willingness to face its own problems—if we can't fix the space program because of pork barrel and deadweight bureaucracy, how can we hope to tackle intractable problems? The U.S. space program could be cheaper, more effective, and more flexible. All that's required is someone in the White House willing to face down entrenched aerospace interest groups. Here's the plan:

Cancel station Freedom. If a true need for a space station someday develops, one can always be built later. Use half the money saved to develop new generations of dumb boosters for cargo and small spaceplanes or SSTOs for people, cutting the cost of access to orbit and rationalizing the U.S. launch program. Use the other half for cost-effective science, especially new robot probes not of the far heavens (fascinating, but irrelevant to daily life on Earth), but of Mars, Venus, and the Sun. Cut NASA overstaffing by a third, which alone will speed up initiatives like the environment "crash program."

Convert the shuttles to a fleet of long-duration orbiters that will be launched at a safe and affordable rate—two or three times per year—for life-science research and other experiments. Do those experiments jointly with the Soviet Union. Conduct research into ideas like nuclear propulsion that might make Moon base and Mars exploration practical, but don't hold your breath till they actually happen. Break NASA's monopoly by allowing the Departments of Defense and Energy to propose civilian space missions; this would force NASA to compete for its budget share.

NASA officials are correct to say that humanity must learn to "live and work in space." But it's spaced-out logic to think we should be jumping directly to that purpose when we haven't even learned sensible ways to get into orbit. ●

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Early Summer Harvest

Giuseppe Tornatore is trapped in admiration. Last year he showed in *Cinema Paradiso* that he venerates Fellini, but he also showed some signs of becoming his own man. In his new film, **Everybody's Fine** (Miramax), adoration has swamped him. Moment after moment is genuflection at the Fellini shrine. Just one out of dozens of examples: a high vertical shot over a beach might have been snipped from the dream sequence early in *8½*. He even places a long episode in Fellini's hometown, Rimini. The best to be said about Tornatore's adoration is that it's frank.

The worst to be said is that it's maiming. Apparently, he relies on his Fellinisms to save his picture, so he has worried insufficiently about his screenplay. As a result, *Everybody's Fine* has a soggy center that Tornatore's imitative flourishes can't transform into the rueful texture he wants. (Another oddment: his collaborator on this maraschino screenplay was Tonino Guerra, who helped Antonioni to create some of the most beautifully austere films of the century.)

The basic idea, itself hoary, is a visit by an aging parent to his children who live elsewhere. (Never mind the Olympian peak of Ozu's *Tokyo Story*: another antecedent is Mazursky's *Harry and Tonto*.) A retired Sicilian civil servant, played by Marcello Mastroianni wearing thick glasses and a gray mustache, goes to see his five children, who, conveniently for the film, live in widely scattered cities—Naples, Rome, Florence, Milan, Turin.

What he discovers eventually is what we could have told him before he started out: that the children will each—in his or her self-defensive way—prove to be a disappointment. (One son is the ultimate disappointment: a suicide.) Also, he learns at last that there is a conspiracy among the children to keep harsh facts about themselves from the old man.

Mastroianni does what he can to give the role salt and edge, but the screenplay works against him, forcing him into falsities of behavior and sentimental attitudes. Even a long episode with the still-lovely Michèle Morgan, as a coeval pensioner on a bus trip with some other pensioners, is taken past poignancy because its pattern is predictable. Tornatore has overlooked a major matter in his Fellini adoration: at his best, his master was concerned with truth-telling, not plot-making.

Still, Tornatore shows some valid feeling and a good deal of deftness, so perhaps there's hope. One instance: near the end when the old man is hospitalized, the sequence begins with the camera concentrating on him in bed. Then, in a single simple crane movement, the camera lifts up and back to reveal his children standing in a semicircle around his bed. The clean elegance of that one camera movement, dramatic but without ostentation, is enough to make us look forward to Tornatore's next.

One reason to be suspicious of pictures about the Holocaust and attendant horrors is a dread of their becoming a stock film genre. Agnieszka Holland's **Europa, Europa** (Orion Classics) is not a routine or exploitative picture, but so little of it is fresh that it seems to rely on programmed responses from its audience.

Holland's screenplay is based on the autobiography of Solomon Perel, a Jew who was born in Germany in 1925, went to Poland with his family in 1938, and was there when the Germans invaded. By then Perel was fluent in German, Polish, and Russian. This faculty, plus the fact that he didn't look especially Jewish (yes, that look is undefinable, but this is an account of something that actually happened), enabled him, as the war flowed and ebbed, to survive in different uniforms, finally in concentration camp garb as the Americans neared. Perel now lives in Israel. The film closes with a glimpse of the real Perel.

The cast is good, not least Marco Hofschneider as the youthful Solly. After some service to the German army on the Russian front, he is sent to a special school for Hitler Youth where anti-Semitism is a prime doctrine and where he narrowly escapes disclosure by circumcision. Hofschneider contends manfully with the various turmoils in his breast.

For her part, Holland tries to explore, even in a sense to justify, Perel's various opportunisms. The thematic question is: Which of us, forced to choose between complicity and certain death, would have done otherwise? But Perel's story is so anomalous that it is much less a historical-moral issue than a freak occurrence. Encircling the anomaly, most of the film is by-now routine World War II stuff.

Holland helped to write the screenplay of Wajda's recent *Korczak*, also a Holocaust story, a film that in my view

FILMS WORTH SEEING

An Angel at My Table. *The life of a New Zealand writer, as dramatized by a New Zealand filmmaker, Jane Campion. Vigorous, open, humane. (Reviewed 6/3/91)* **The Comfort of Strangers.** *Harold Pinter's screenplay, from Ian McEwan's novel, has the spookiness and ultimate flaws of the book. But this Eros-Thanatos story set in Venice is excellently acted and directed. (4/29/91)* **Thelma and Louise.** *Two women cut loose from their ordinary lives, roaming the Southwest in a convertible. Their fate is patently manufactured, but there's considerable wit and slash along the way. (7/1/91)* **Truth or Dare.** *Madonna bares nearly all—of herself and her life. Exhibitionism made (almost) authentic in a fast-paced documentary. (6/10/91)* —**SK**

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brought insufficient cinematic ingenuity to its subject. Holland now goes overboard in the opposite direction—dream sequences of Hitler and Stalin dancing, for instance. But they don't make the film any more essential.

One of the older contradictions in art is the nihilist work. If the center cannot hold and the rough beast is already in the suburbs of Bethlehem, why bother to write a novel or poem or play about it ... e all is lost anyway? Yet some of our best twentieth-century art has been nihilist—Céline, Beckett, (some of) Sartre. Not quite in their class but certainly in their vein, or one part of it, is a new American filmmaker named Richard Linklater. He wrote and directed and acts in **Slacker** (Orion Classics), a chronicle of suspended animation in Austin, Texas.

It's witty, though a bit too long, in its account of a group of (mostly) young people whose chief aim in life is to hang out. They care only for small gratifications, despise work, are resigned to the world's destruction—and they don't worry. Yet about these people, himself playing one of them, Linklater has made a film that is only seemingly casual, that (he assures us) was carefully scripted, cast, and rehearsed. The very existence of this picture contradicts its mood.

The structure is the old relay-race form. The film stays with A until A meets B, then it continues with B until B meets C, and so on. At the start a young man (Linklater) gets off a bus in Austin and takes a taxi. The camera then goes to the hood of the cab's motor as it travels, shooting past the impassive driver as the young man in the back seat launches into a discursive, fairly funny monologue about his dreams, about the reality of roads not taken, why they are just as real as the road taken, and so on.

When he leaves the cab, we hear the screech of a car starting quickly. After it zooms past, he sees a woman lying in the road, her groceries spilled. The young man stops to look. A jogging woman, still jogging in place, stops to look. Then the camera goes to the driver of the car who, we learn, is the son of the woman in the road whom he threw out. And so on, each "relay-runner" contributing some oddity in a spaced-out way. (Some of the people are connected tangentially with the University of Texas.)

It's all a higher-grade undergraduate prank, though it's only occasionally touched with undergraduate solemnity—that is, genuine belief in merely clever phrases. Most of the time, it's parody or put-on, a kind of cartoon-strip mixture of existential angst and store-front mysticism. ●

Why Poland's Church should stay out of Poland's politics.

A Theocratic State?

By Czeslaw Milosz

I have been following certain recent events in Poland from a distance, too rooted in America by now to consider making a permanent change in my country of residence. As I am a disinterested observer, perhaps some of my comments on the Polish situation will prove useful, although I am certain that I could avoid a great many unpleasant accusations were I to refrain from expressing my views.

No doubt the reader expects me, after such an introduction, to speak about politics. Not so. As readers of the books that I wrote after *The Captive Mind* know, in my quarrels with communism, too, politics have been rather a pretext and a disguise. Marxism always seemed to me to be a consequence of the profound erosion of man's religious imagination on the European continent. Dostoyevsky understood this when, in *The Possessed*, he depicted in prophetic shorthand the actions of revolutionaries engaged in an attempt to give meaning to history in a world without God. In this sense, totalitarian movements had a metaphysical background stamped with a minus sign, and can be counted among the manifestations of "European nihilism."

The erosion of the religious imagination is, in my view, the core of twentieth-century thought; and it is what has lent our age its apocalyptic features. But the dissolution of totalitarian movements by no means suggests that a fundamental change has taken place in this regard. It is enough to look at the prosperous and well-fed sector of humanity in the countries of the West to become convinced that the concept of a religiously ordered cosmos is disintegrating also under the impact of science and technology, and that if people, especially among the younger generations, still have a strong need for faith, it is a homeless, groping faith that does not necessarily turn to Christianity.

In Poland, however, the churches are full. The Pole appears in the world as *unus defensor Mariae*, while the Polish pope sustains the Christian hope that wants to be a "sign of opposition" toward the world. And yet this exceptional position of the Pole on the world map can easily lead to false inferences that optimistically ignore the progressive standardization of industrial civilization.

The Church achieved an unusually high moral position in Poland both during the war and afterward, during the forty-five-year period of atheistic regimes that tried to erase the boundary between good and evil by introducing chaos into language. The Church continually issued reminders about basic values, and thereby defended the simplest and truest distinctions. In this way, it met the demand for an authority that rests not on force, but on the dignity of an instructional office. And so Poland became a country with two hierarchies: the hierarchy of the sham Communist apparatus, and the true hierarchy at whose head stood Cardinal Wyszynski, like the regent of an invisible monarchy. He had the good fortune to survive until the day when he could transfer power to the hands of the king, who, it turned out, was one of his own bishops: Karol Wojtyla, elevated to the papal throne as the first Slavic pope in history. This extraordinary, paradigmatic morality play, staged by history itself, sank deep into the consciousness of Poles, and contributes to the preservation of Poland as an island of faithfulness to the Church amid the profoundly de-Christianized countries to the west, as well as to the east, of its borders.

Certainly, religion does not signify only the human soul's yearning for the sacralization of existence and for inner peace in relation to the ultimate questions. It signifies also the liturgy and the popular participation in ritual, when just being there together with others who think and feel the same way has its own value, both as an identification with one's fellow man and as mutual confirmation in one's faith. These two facets of religion cannot be separated, despite the fact that they apparently correspond to the two separate types of religious experience: the vertical and the horizontal. The erosion of the religious imagination

Czeslaw Milosz was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1980. His new book, *Beginning with My Streets*, will be published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in January.

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affects the first of these in particular. This can easily be confirmed by devoting a moment's attention to the great revolution of the modern era: the separation of literature and art from the traditional worldview elaborated by centuries of Christianity.

Is there anything that offers better testimony to what is going on in man's head than the creations of his mind and his hand? Those creations surround us, speak to us, and soon not only science and technology change us from the inside, but also the literature and the art that is indirectly derived from them. Yet these internal changes that make it difficult to have faith remain hidden, beneath the surface, as it were, while horizontal religiousness continues undisturbed and is even able to celebrate some triumphs. And the last several decades, I think, have accelerated this process, this increasing division between the two currents. The intensified social activism of the Christian churches and their participation in activities that formerly were left to politicians can be counted among the many consequences of this process. Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz predicted that "ethics will devour metaphysics," and perhaps this is happening today in the bosom of Christianity, too.

I have not been called to speak out about the Church. But questions of faith matter deeply to me, and they do not necessarily have to be measured by the external triumph of the Church, and by the numbers of the faithful who take part in religious services. It is entirely possible that in order to gain a truer picture of what is happening in people's hearts and minds, one should go outside the circle of phrases used by the clergy in their various pronouncements. What is striking in Poland today is the reappearance of two languages, particularly since the place of the Marxist language has been taken by a Catholic language. One can only wish, not least for the sake of the priests, that the universally expressed agreement on the leading role of Catholicism as the religion of the entire nation has not obscured a somewhat different truth expressed in conversations that break off in their presence.

For, let us say this openly, people in Poland have begun to fear the priests, and this is not a good sign. Since my own experience includes the two interwar decades when the Concordat with the Church granted the parish priest and the school catechist such immense power that neither teachers nor students dared to tangle with them, I find such a fear understandable. How many members of the Diet, for example, how many members of the senate, will dare to make speeches that might expose them to the accusation that their views are not the views of believing Catholics? And so we are returned to an old controversy: Should the Church aspire to use the state as its instrument when the highest ethical values are at stake?

It would seem that since man is a weak and imperfect creature, appeals to his conscience always yield worse results than prohibitions backed up by laws that at least force him to avoid evil. Since it is a certainty, in the eyes of the Church, that its teaching about how man ought to live is true, does not the Church have an obligation to impose it on people, and to try to organize society in such a way as to diverge from religious precepts as little as possible? On the surface, this seems logical, by the logic of belief. And yet I must insist that the damage that an affirmative answer to this question would bring significantly outweighs the benefits.

The Founding Fathers of American democracy, which is based on the principle of the separation of Church and State, understood this very well. Thomas Jefferson, in his notes on the constitution of the state of Virginia, clearly separated the civil rights of the citizen from the citizen's adherence to one or another faith. ("It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself.") Jefferson's principles became the model for the Constitution of the United States. In his draft for "A Bill Establishing Religious Freedom" in Virginia, Jefferson asserted that

> our civil rights have no dependance on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry; that therefore proscribing any citizen as unworthy of the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity to offices of trust or emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which, in common with his fellow citizens, he has a natural right; that it tends also to corrupt the principles of that very religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing, with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments, those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though indeed these are criminal who do not withstand such temptation, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way. . . .

The separation of Church and State, which has been scrupulously observed in the United States, did not prevent religion from extending its influence; and today, comparing the United States with Western Europe, one can say that the former is significantly less de-Christianized than the latter. The vast majority of American citizens define themselves as members of one of the Christian denominations, and although statistics can be misleading in this regard, they are confirmed by the number of the faithful who attend church.

Still, religion in America has long had rather a horizontal quality. It has been largely a social bond linking the members of a given local community. This characteristic is particularly pronounced today, as expressed in the intensified interest of Americans in serving a "cau[illegible]," be it world peace, or justice for the economically oppressed, or the right to sanctuary for the politically persecuted abroad. At the same time, the attitude of American Catholics toward the ethical teachings of the Vatican is much more engaged than among Western Europeans; that is, the former try to diminish the distance between what they say they believe and what they do, whereas the latter appear to be satisfied with a permanent division between lofty but "unlivable" doctrine and practice constrained by life itself. An example of this is the attitude toward the ban on contraceptive devices, a ban that is openly rejected in America.

Debates over Church-State relations are unavoidable in Poland. If they are to take place, the participants must be able to speak out without fear. That is why I wish to express openly certain opinions that have undoubtedly been expressed quietly, in a circle of trusted friends, by many individuals.

I received and retained so much from my religion classes in high school, especially from Church history, dogmatics, and apologetics, that it would be wrong of me to denigrate the virtues of a Catholic education. And yet, since the system of catechization has developed so well outside the schoolhouse, I must confess that I find the arguments of the opponents of change more convincing. These opponents of returning religion to the schools seem to me to be more farsighted.

Every official institutionalization and every application of force is harmful to religious faith, and if at all possible it should be avoided. Participation in religious classes in Poland is voluntary, but the situation is different in countries where the majority of families are nonreligious (for example, in the Czech republic) or belong, more or less equally, to a number of denominations. Where a heavily Catholic majority responds to the religious minority with distaste, perceiving it as devoid of those characteristics that make "a good Pole," there is a danger of precisely the compulsion that was foreseen by Jefferson. A large number of

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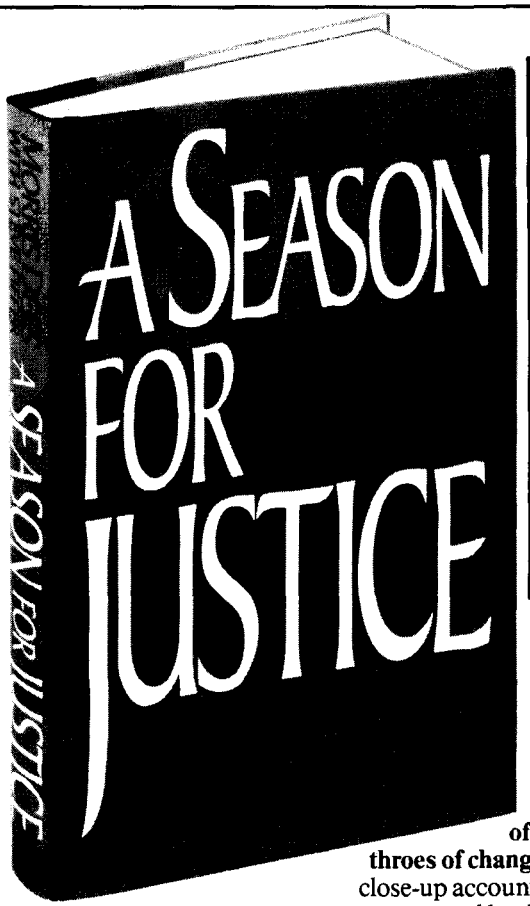

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families and children will resist such compulsion in the name of freedom of conscience, but then these children will not receive any religious instruction. Obviously, a great deal depends on the intellectual level and the pedagogical abilities of the priests who act as catechists; if anyone can assure me that everything looks fine on this account, I will withdraw my suspicions about school becoming a breeding place of anti-clericalism. But I am troubled by the fact that the return of religion to the schools took place suddenly and was not preceded by a debate. It gave the impression that the governmental spheres were timidly dependent on the Church hierarchy.

Moreover, it does not appear that the clergy's obsessive interest in questions of sexual morality can be discussed freely in Poland. The changes in the Church introduced by Vatican II led in the West to the well-known phenomenon of Catholics genuflecting before the modern world and buying their way into its good graces; and since modern technological-industrial societies are permissive, many of the faithful, including priests, competed with each other in this surrender. Against such a background, resistance on the part of the Church hierarchy in some countries takes on a particular eloquence, turning everything literally upside down.

Let us note, however, that those countries, Poland among them, found themselves in a different situation than Western Europe or North America. The world record for abortions belongs either to Catholic Poland or to the unreligious Soviet Union; I am not going to assess which of these deserves top honors. Aborting a fetus is, in my view, a grave sin, but it is resorted to on a massive scale wherever there is a lack of contraceptive devices, and it has reached the point where women blithely treat this intervention as an alternative means of contraception. The phenomenon of abortion therefore has different dimensions in Poland than in the West, where contraceptive devices are quite readily available.

It may be useful to introduce the opinion of an American priest with whom I have discussed these topics. He is not inclined to demonstrative acts of disobedience toward the hierarchy, like some of his colleagues; but his opinions do not differ from convictions that are quite widely held. According to this priest, the realm of sexual behavior is so singular, and at the same time so dependent on historical circumstances, that only with great difficulty can it submit to unchanging rules imposed from outside—this the Protestant churches have understood, and therefore they have left these problems to the conscience of the faithful.

The Catholic Church, by introducing a ban on the use of contraceptives despite the opinions of its commission of experts, shot itself in the foot, so to speak, and it has been unable to wriggle out of this contradiction ever since. This ban is not observed, which may be one consequence of the changes in the consciousness of the faithful since Vatican II, when the historical nature of certain apparently immutable rules and institutions was recognized, leading to the abandonment of the post-Tridentine canon of the Holy Mass, the abolition of Latin, the lifting of fasts. This new perspective was also the source for considering the Church's pronouncements on sexual morality as only temporarily binding, and destined to be lifted sooner or later. However, says my priest, there have been various attitudes toward this in the history of Christianity, and one should not draw too many conclusions from the customs of the last few centuries. For a very long time, for example, marriage was a civil institution, not a sacrament, and only gradually was a cleric's participation in a wedding sanctioned by the recognition of marriage as a sacrament in the thirteenth century.

Just a century ago, my interlocutor reminds me, the majority of children died in childhood, and this is still the case in the Third World as a consequence of disease and malnutrition. Is it possible that we are in favor of this undoubtedly natural form of birth control and bear a grudge against medicine for trying to prevent this? If we take an unalterably negative position against abortion, we cannot at the same time divide contraceptive devices into those that are natural and those that have been invented by science, banning the latter. After all, the Church does not only have the right to teach women that abortion is a great evil; it also has obligations toward women. A woman who becomes pregnant, especially a young unmarried girl, should feel herself enveloped in Christian solicitude, and be able to count on understanding and assistance from Church institutions as well as from her family.

The views of this priest seem to me to be more humane than the views of those clergymen who do not see the forest for the trees, and who preach a religion of prohibitions instead of a religion of the Gospels. The result of this is that every citizen who supports the right of legislators to free debate—on the question, for example, of a law on abortion in Poland—is viewed as a moral monster. In such a complicated and delicate matter, with a host of legal and social consequences that demand consideration, the arguments cannot be clearly divided into black and white. For that reason, it is best if one assumes that one's opponent has noble intentions, even if he is mistaken.

I raise these questions not because I nourish any pretensions to authority, but simply because were I to ignore them, I would be unable to engage matters that are far more important to me. I am not thoroughly delighted by the triumph of the Church in the realm of what I have called horizontal religious experience, because it reminds me of some of its previous forms, including both the obscurantist religiosity of the seventeenth century and the religiosity of a half century ago, during the interwar years. In both instances, vertical religious experience, which is my main concern, did not fare very well. Before the war, political clericalism, allied with the right, was opposed by a rather shallow anti-clericalism of the intellectuals; and this division into two camps narrowed the field of action for the few individuals who truly cared about religious thought.

In the postwar years, however, an extraordinary change took place in this regard; and its dimensions can be grasped only by means of comparisons. A Catholic intellectual milieu came into being, which, with rare exceptions (such as the group associated with the journal *Verbum*), had scarcely existed in the interwar decades, and it was probably larger and more lively than in any other country with a predominantly Catholic population. This does not mean that there were no religiously oriented exceptional thinkers in interwar Poland; one could cite Marian Zdziechowski or Karol Ludwik Koninski. Yet this new milieu was entirely different from a few isolated individuals. One measure of its development and consolidation in the postwar years is the number of books that were written by those who belonged to this circle of writers or were translated by them from other languages. In no other Communist-ruled country was such a powerful counterweight created against the official gibberish as in Poland, where there were functioning Catholic publishing houses, very sophisticated journals, and a Catholic university as well.

Thus the conditions for a new kind of alliance came into being. It is no secret that before the war the intelligentsia, especially the so-called creative intelligentsia, looked down upon the "benighted" Church, and that in their view "Catholic" meant "obscurantist." Exceptions were made, but on the whole religious intellectuals were seen as exotic beasts.

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Only in the course of the past few decades has religion become something entirely different in the eyes of this intelligentsia, something inseparably linked with meditation on the human condition, and the credit goes to the energetic activity of those bright minds among (on occasion) the priests and the laity.

But it was too wonderful to last. That whole circle of Catholic intellectuals owed its attractiveness in great measure to a state that was promulgating the religion of dialectical materialism. The resistance to that shallow, dry doctrine attained an added dimension that was deeper than politics when it reached back both to the Bible and to all the riches of human thought and art that it inspired—that is, to the European Christian tradition. Actually, it was precisely that milieu that was most successful at maintaining contact with the thought and the creativity of the West in both its religious and its non-religious manifestations. But from the moment that the atheistic state faded away, and along with it the necessity of resisting it, the old configuration returned with astonishing strength, as if human societies are subject to the principle of homeostasis. This extraordinary Catholic intellectual milieu again began to be perceived by the general Catholic community as "Jews and Free Masons."

Religion springs from such powerful human needs that one cannot measure its fate in decades. The centuries must be its measure. The transition from pagan antiquity to Christianity in the Roman empire was a lengthy process. It is difficult to say, therefore, what point we are at in the post-Christian scientific-technological civilization because, since we are living within it, we lack perspective. Still, based on the observation of such countries as England or France, in which one sees the decline in the number of candidates for the priesthood, a theology of "the death of God" and of *Deus otiosus* or the inactive God, a picture emerges of an already advanced ebbing of faith.

On the American continent, horizontal religious experience benefits from social engagement—for example, from liberation theology. In contrast, in our part of Europe it is coupled with the violence of national sentiments, so that Polishness or Slovakness is identified with Roman Catholicism, Ukrainianness with Greek-rite Catholicism, Russianness with Orthodoxy, and so on. This linkage may be maintained for quite a long time; but I am skeptical. It may be that the clergy will go on celebrating the national rite by sprinkling holy water, by blessing and exorcising, while at the same time mak-

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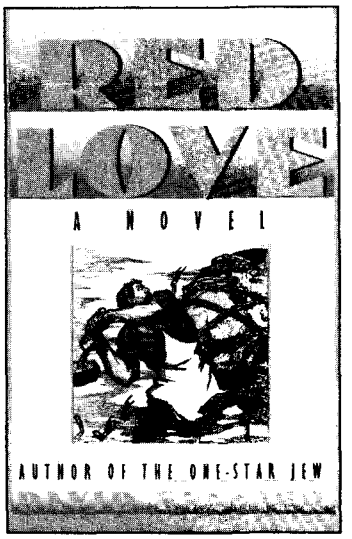

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ing fools of themselves with their condemnation of sex, but in the meantime a hollowing-out of religion from the inside will take place, and in a couple of decades Poland will become a country as little Christian as England or France, with a strong dose of anti-clericalism, the passionate intensity of which will be proportionate to the power of the clergy and its program for a theocratic state.

But the real stakes are even higher, and they are located elsewhere. Something terrible happened to religion as a result of the triumph of science, especially in the nineteenth century. It cannot be ruled out that we are still dealing today with a phenomenon of delayed consciousness, that is, that our imagination about the universe and the human world has remained at the old nineteenth-century level, and we are unable to reach a new understanding that is closer to what has been happening since that time in scientific thought. The major reason for our inability to do so is that we lack an appropriate language, as can be seen today in both the non-translatability of several fundamental post-Einsteinian scientific theories, and also in the helplessness of theology. And yet many things are happening, after all, at the same time as these manifestations of disintegration and decline. "The new is coming," as people know very well who follow the signs and the omens in the fields of poetry, art, and music, and also in a field that can still be described only approximately.

I write out of a concern for the preservation of readiness, of openness, in order to avoid the petrification of inherited structures. Such a petrification will almost certainly result in the religious dimension becoming inaccessible for people in Poland, in its becoming even repulsive to them, owing to the errors of triumphalism.

—translated by Madeline G. Levine

The Fixer

BY JAMES CHACE

Counsel to the President: A Memoir by Clark Clifford with Richard Holbrooke

(Random House, 736 pp., $25)

For a start, Clark Clifford was *not* an architect of postwar American foreign policy. George Marshall and Dean Acheson can rest comfortably in their graves. Clifford's autobiography reveals instead the story of one of those who served a president's (in this case, Truman's) purposes by bringing to the White House an extraordinary feel for politics, in the tradition of Colonel Edward House, who ministered to Wilson's political ambitions, and Louis Howe, who served FDR's.

This tall, remarkably handsome young man from St. Louis, Missouri, began his career on temporary assignment as Truman's deputy naval attaché in 1945. He quickly became the indispensable aide-de-camp, even studying a poker manual until his game improved enough for him to join the poker-playing parties that the new president, who didn't particularly relish the game, used as a way of socializing. In those early, heady years when Acheson and Marshall were forging the postwar international order—what Acheson called "the creation"—Clifford was ready with canny political advice, prepared to use his considerable forensic skills to fashion Truman's homespun language into attractive rhetoric. Not for nothing was Clifford the protégé of Judge Samuel Rosenman, FDR's speechwriter. Nobody in the inner circle considered him a statesman at the time.

Finally, in 1968, Clifford seemed to have achieved his goal of exchanging the image of the political fixer for the image of the elder statesman when he became secretary of defense under Lyndon Johnson. And this memoir has been clearly designed to be his final, finest creation, his own version of himself made in marble, his portrait of a man who from the beginning put policy above politics. It appears, however, at a time when Clifford's reputation is under pressure from new and unexpected quarters. The legend that Clifford created of himself, the story of the man of rectitude whose devotion to the law and to public service transcended such mundane concerns as money, is being challenged: his financial dealings with Arab investors, some of whom were shareholders in a foreign bank involved in laundering drug money, may lead to legal action against him by New York County's district attorney. Bewildered, like Othello, he too may come to lament that his "occupation's gone" at the very moment that his self-justifying book is being published.

In his memoir Clifford praises George Kennan as "brilliant," Marshall as a man of the "strictest rectitude," and Acheson as "the most self-confident [illegible] I ever encountered," but he tells the story of the origins of the cold war, and of foreign policy in general, in a way that consistently scants their roles. In his account of the part that he played in urging Truman to recognize the State of Israel, with which he opens his volume, to establish immediately his credentials as a statesman, Clifford blames Marshall for the administration's wavering on the issue in 1947 and 1948, now in favor of partition, now in favor of a trusteeship for Palestine. Truman, owing largely to the influence of Eddie Jacobsen, his friend and former partner in the haberdashery business, supported partition and the recognition of Israel. Marshall and Secretary of State Robert Lovett opposed it. Clifford believed that Lovett and Marshall double-crossed Truman on this issue when the American delegation at the United Nations switched its position in March 1948.

Clifford only alludes to a "bitter incident" in his book, but it is possible to establish some of the particulars that he does not disclose. According to Robert J. Donovan, Truman's biographer, Clifford accused Marshall, in an address to the American Historical Association in 1976, of being disloyal to Truman on Israel, claiming that America's U.N. representative had given a speech in support of trusteeship for Palestine that was a "de facto reversal of the president's policy," and that this was known in advance by Lovett and Marshall. According to Donovan, the historical record shows that Clifford was wrong, that Truman was fully aware that the State Department had contemplated a switch in policy from partition to trusteeship, and that Truman gave Marshall and Lovett the go-ahead to allow the U.N. representative to make the speech. It may well have been a misunderstanding on Truman's part. In any case, Truman overruled Clifford's suggestion of disloyalty by Marshall.

Marshall, through the intervention of Lovett, later supported Truman's position, but the general never spoke to Clifford again. There was no doubt that Marshall disliked Clifford. As Clifford himself points out, Marshall "regarded me as a domestic presidential adviser who had no business meddling in for-

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eign policy"—and it *was* Clifford's usefulness as an adviser on domestic politics that Truman found most valuable (though it may be worth noting that Clifford's name does not even appear in *Plain Speaking*, Merle Miller's oral history of Harry Truman). But this, of course, was precisely the evaluation of his talents that Clifford sought to avoid.

In his portrait of himself, Clifford is especially proud of the report that he produced in the summer of 1946 on Soviet-American relations, with the help of his aide and alter ego George Elsey, at the request of President Truman. The president asked for a record of Soviet violations of international agreements, but Clifford was determined to expand the scope of the project.

He had read George Kennan's 8,000-word "Long Telegram," an analysis of the sources of Soviet conduct that Kennan had dispatched from Moscow on February 22, 1946. Kennan was eager to dispel any assumptions that there were no structural impediments within the Soviet Union to normal relations with the United States. Kennan wished to refute the Rooseveltian view that Stalin's hostility to the West resulted from insecurity that itself was largely owed to external threats. For Kennan, Soviet foreign policy did not respond to what the West did or did not do. It was rather that "suspicion in one degree or another is an integral part of [the] Soviet system, and will not yield entirely to any form of rational persuasion or assurance." Prefiguring the doctrine of containment that he spelled out in his famous "X" article in *Foreign Affairs* a year later, Kennan called on the United States to "draw the line" against any future targets of Soviet expansion.

As Clifford tells it, he decided to "fill the gap between Kennan's analysis and policy recommendations." He canvassed the views of other senior officials in the government concerned with American policy toward the Soviet Union. Clifford believes that the Clifford-Elsey Report, delivered to the president on September 24, 1946, made a new point: "It argued that as a matter of the highest national security the nation urgently needed to create a policy and a strategy to resist the Soviet Union." The tone of the report exceeded even Kennan's rather breathless prose, but it is difficult to determine just how novel Clifford's recommendations were. After all, Kennan had already urged a strict strategy to deal with the Russians. Not only did Kennan propose drawing the line, but he also urged that American military strength be reconstituted, that economic and military aid for our allies be considered, and that the Soviets, as a consequence of such initiatives, might restrain their hostility and seek agreements with the West. As Clifford himself notes, "We outlined a policy very similar to that which Kennan would propose publicly the following year." When Kennan read the report, he wrote that he had "no fault to find with it." This judgment is not surprising, since the report reflected Kennan's views, and therefore appears less original than Clifford wishes to present it.

It is impossible to know how deeply Truman was influenced by what he read. In late 1946 Washington was still making serious efforts to reach an accommodation with the Soviet Union. Truman himself even said of Stalin, during the 1948 presidential campaign, "I like Old Joe," and described the Soviet ruler as "a decent fellow [who] is a prisoner of the Politburo." This is an astonishing characterization from someone who had digested the Clifford-Elsey report. Clifford may well be correct in believing that Truman retained "a surprisingly warm personal memory of his only meeting with Stalin at Potsdam in July of 1945." On the other hand, Truman may have been less influenced by Clifford in this matter than Clifford believes.

Clifford's inclination to enhance his own stature by diminishing the contributions of his more celebrated colleagues is particularly evident in his account of Acheson. "Our relationship," he writes frankly, "always bore elements of rivalry and competition." Clearly Clifford resented Acheson's unwillingness to pay much attention to Clifford's views on foreign policy. As he puts it, "I was very much the novice." He goes on to point out that Acheson, had he been able to have "structured Washington to his own specification," would have "half-seriously considered eliminating from any serious involvement in policy everyone except himself and the president, and perhaps Marshall."

To prove this point, Clifford questions—in a footnote!—Acheson's account of the famous meeting in February 1947 with the congressional leadership, in which Marshall and Acheson sought congressional support for aid to Greece and Turkey that later became the Truman Doctrine. It was at this meeting that Acheson, noting that Marshall's presentation was ineffective, seized the day. As Acheson recounted the event in *Present at the Creation*, Marshall, "most unusually and unhappily, flubbed his opening statement." Acheson, taking the initiative, asked Truman and Marshall if he could speak. And then he went on to develop his famous "rotten apples" metaphor to describe the spreading infection of Soviet pressure through Greece and Turkey to the east. At the end of his peroration, Senator Arthur Vandenberg, the reigning Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said solemnly, "Mr. President, if you will say that to the Congress and the country, I will support you and I believe that most of the members will do the same."

Clifford says that neither Vandenberg nor Truman remembered it that way, that both gave Marshall credit for the presentation that led to bipartisan support. Acheson's version, however, was never corrected by Truman, and Joseph Jones, who was a member of the State Department at the time, has given a near definitive account of the same meeting in *The Fifteen Weeks*, his book on the genesis of the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine. Jones recounts Acheson's speech in far greater detail than did Acheson himself, describing how, after Acheson's presentation, "a profound silence ensued that lasted perhaps ten

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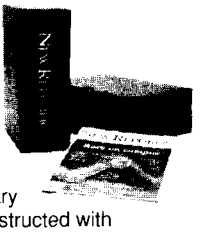

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seconds. It was broken by the voice of Senator Vandenberg. Slowly and with gravity, Vandenberg said that he had been greatly impressed, even shaken, by what he had heard."

In his account of the Truman years, Clifford has not inflated his role on the political side. If anything, he has underplayed it, for it was then, in the campaign of 1948, that Clifford furnished the seminal strategies—but for the campaign, not for American foreign policy. In the years between his service in the Truman administration and the Johnson administration, Clifford built a law practice that was based on his knowledge of how to deal with the government. Within a year or so after leaving office, he was representing RCA, Standard Oil, the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Republic of Indonesia, El Paso Natural Gas, Philips Petroleum (his first client) and Howard Hughes (his second client) of Hughes Tool Company, RKO and TWA. Not a bad start for an attorney with just one partner, a Justice Department lawyer specializing in antitrust cases who had never practiced law in Washington before. Reportedly the highest paid attorney in Washington, Clifford became the personification of the corporate lawyer-lobbyist.

Out of government, Clifford remained an adviser to presidents, the role that he most preferred to that of the lawyer-lobbyist. He became John F. Kennedy's attorney, only too ready to serve Kennedy's purposes, whether it be to advise his brother Teddy on how to treat his suspension from Harvard College for cheating on a Spanish exam when he was about to run for the Senate, or to defend the president himself from allegations that his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*, was written by Theodore Sorensen. When Kennedy created what was called the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Group, Clifford became its chairman.

Clifford did not emerge from the Truman years as the statesman he hoped to become (though he did insert the Point Four program of foreign technical assistance into Truman's inaugural address). It was under Lyndon Johnson that he came closer to his dream, and in fact became a significant policy-maker, and not on the domestic front. At long last he was esteemed for his keen interest in foreign affairs. Still officially outside the government in 1965, he was asked by the president to offer his advice about the conduct of the war in Vietnam. Nothing was going right in Vietnam in 1965, and Johnson was faced with a decision on whether to ask for a serious escalation in the form of a massive commitment of American ground troops.

Johnson asked Clifford and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara to spend the weekend with him at Camp David on July 25, 1965, and thrash out the case for escalation. The bombing of the north had begun only two weeks after the president's inauguration, and by May it had become a program of sustained bombing under the code name "Rolling Thunder." Clifford points out in his book that "no connection between bombing the north and sending American ground troops was recognized and discussed *before* the bombing began." He may well be right to state that "this was the greatest failure in the entire decision-making process." Once the bombing began, however, it was inevitable that the military would demand American combat troops to protect the air bases from which the bombers were launched, and later to begin offensive operations against the enemy. Only George Ball, the undersecretary of state, seriously opposed the escalation.

As a member of the President's Intelligence Board, Clifford had access to secret memoranda, and at one point Johnson asked Clifford to comment on a letter from John McCone, the CIA director. In essence, McCone had written that the administration had to decide whether to send ground troops to Vietnam and hit the north harder to prevent imminent defeat; if the United States was not prepared to embark on a bold and aggressive campaign, it should not send ground troops at all. McCone's hardline thinking clarified Clifford's. But Clifford reached the opposite conclusion: "If the only way to avoid defeat was by the massive escalation that McCone was suggesting, then we should not escalate at all." Clifford decided to write a letter to Johnson warning that Vietnam could be "a quagmire . . . an open-ended commitment . . . without a realistic hope of victory."

When Johnson arranged the weekend at Camp David, it was for Clifford to rebut McNamara. He knew that Clifford probably would oppose McNamara's intransigent position. Only a few days earlier Ball and McNamara had crossed swords over the troop buildup, at a meeting at which Ball was isolated in his flat assertion that "we can't win." (Clifford, who was not in the government, was present at the meeting, but kept silent.) McGeorge Bundy, the national security adviser, said that Ball's views constituted "a radical shift in policy, without any evidence it should be done." But it was McNamara who was most forceful in refuting Ball's argument. "We would lose all of Southeast Asia," he asserted. The next day McNamara gave what Clifford describes as

> the most extreme version of the domino theory that I had ever heard: "Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia are all at immediate risk. . . . The ripple effect would be great—in Japan, and in India. . . . Greece and Turkey would move to neutralist positions, Communist agitation would increase in Africa."

After that peroration, Clifford prepared himself for the "showdown" at Camp David. He believed that Johnson could ride out Republican charges that he had lost Vietnam, because the next election was four years away. But Clifford was also aware that all of Kennedy's top advisers, who were now Johnson's, were united in urging escalation. Despite what he still calls McNamara's "formidable intelligence," he knew that McNamara was dead wrong—as he appears to be, in this narrative, throughout the whole Vietnamese debacle. As McNamara said years later, he had no particular qualifications to be secretary of defense:

> Under what conditions should the U.S. government consider the application of military force? What in the hell does the president of the Ford Motor Company, which I was, know about the issue? I'll tell you what this automobile executive knew. *Zero! Nothing.* I knew it too. I felt in my heart that my appointment as secretary of defense was wrong.

No such self-doubt was evident, however, when Clifford encountered McNamara on this or any other occasion, save at his tearful farewell, when he resigned in favor of Clifford himself.

In any event, Clifford and McNamara duelled at high noon at Camp David. Clifford warned Johnson that the United States could not win the war, and that we would lose more than 50,000 men. "It will ruin us," he said. "Five years, 50,000 men killed, hundreds of billions of dollars—it's just not for us." And McNamara, well, he largely repeated the hoary argument over credibility. As Clifford tells it, McNamara said nothing new, only that if South Vietnam fell, "*this* would hurt the U.S. throughout the entire world. The buildup was necessary if we wanted to avoid a rapid defeat." End of discussion. LBJ takes a lonely walk, and the escalation is on.

But McNamara, it turns out, did not see this meeting as high noon. In fact, he can't remember it at all. In an interview in 1989, he told Sidney Blumenthal in *The Washington Post Magazine* that "I have absolutely zero recollection." The documents show that what Clifford said to McNamara and the president is true, but McNamara's assertion certainly makes

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you wonder whether the meeting had the decisive quality that Clifford attributes to it. If this was the "showdown," why has McNamara forgotten it? Johnson himself wrote that the meetings on the Monday after the weekend were the ones at which he finally made up his mind to escalate. But Clifford cites Assistant Secretary of State William P. Bundy's cables that went out earlier, alerting embassies abroad of the new policy. Perhaps Johnson had made up his mind before Monday, maybe even before the weekend. Perhaps Clifford mistook the importance of his moment in the sun, and it was not a decisive confrontation after all. Still, Clifford was right about the course of the war. Which makes his subsequent support of the war all the more tragic.

Having lost the battle, and aware that his clout was less than he imagined, Clifford shifted ground. He was determined to preserve what influence he still might retain with the president. Once Johnson had made up his mind, Clifford went all out to back him up. Indeed, he repeatedly urged greater bombing. "Once the president had committed us to Vietnam, I would generally support actions that I hoped would shorten the war or minimize American losses." For the next two years Clifford would "look for ways to make it succeed." In so doing, of course, he ensured his own continued access to the president. And in 1968, much to his surprise, he was asked to head the Defense Department.

As secretary of defense, Clifford had his finest hour, and proved far abler than his predecessor. On taking office, he set up a task force and asked the right questions: "Will 205,000 more men do the job?" The military could give "no assurance" that they would. "How many more troops might be needed—and when?" "There was no way of knowing." And so on. Horrified by the weakness of the military's case, which seemed to consist of a continued war of attrition with no assurance of victory, Clifford became determined to turn the president around, to begin negotiations, to initiate a policy of de-escalation. And in the months that followed he maneuvered to persuade the president to change his policy—a shift that could, not so incidentally, help the Democrats win the election in the fall. Clifford saw disaster all around—for the prosecution of the war, for American foreign policy generally, and for the Democratic Party.

Johnson resisted efforts to reverse course, but he was shaken when Acheson, hitherto a firm supporter of the war, turned against it and urged withdrawal. Clifford does not mention it in his book, but Johnson had given carte blanche to Acheson to examine the conduct of the war. In February 1968 Acheson had already decided to gather all the facts he could about Vietnam, lest he simply be manipulated to lend his support to the administration. When the president asked Acheson to come over to the White House while he explained General William Westmoreland's request for some 200,000 troops, Acheson was appalled at Johnson's tirade. As Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas tell the story in *The Wise Men*, Acheson finally excused himself and walked back to his office. A little later, when Johnson's national security adviser telephoned him to ask why he walked out, Acheson said, "You can tell the president—and you tell him in precisely these words—that he can take Vietnam and stick it up his ass."

With this message delivered, Johnson asked Acheson to return to the White House, where the former secretary of state told him that "the Joint Chiefs of Staff don't know what they're talking about." Acheson was fed up with canned briefings. If Johnson wanted his help, then he needed "full run of the shop." He got it; and when Clifford became secretary of defense, he and Acheson became allies. Holding no Cabinet post, Acheson was free to tell Johnson what he finally had come to believe, that "we have to get out of Vietnam." He was a pragmatist and a realist, and the senior member of the so-called "wise men," that group of elder statesmen that Johnson assembled from time to time to give him advice and comfort as he pursued the elusive victory in Vietnam.

Acheson minced no words at the lunch with Johnson that followed the dinner of the wise men that Clifford helped to arrange in late March 1968. As Acheson spoke of the impossibility of achieving military victory, the president wearily scribbled on his notepad, "Adjust our course. Move to disengage." And when the chief of staff, General Earl Wheeler, tried to correct Acheson by explaining that the American troops were not seeking military victory, only helping the Vietnamese to avoid a Communist victory, Acheson snapped back, "Then what in the name of God are 500,000 men out there doing—chasing girls?" Less than a week later Johnson told a national television audience that he was stopping the bombing north of the 20th parallel and offering to negotiate. Almost half of the wise men had given the military their full or partial support, but Acheson's advice was doubtless the most influential, as Clifford himself admits. Still, Clifford helped to orchestrate the melody.

In the remaining months of his tenure, the secretary of defense bent all his efforts to get the Americans and the Vietnamese, north and south, to negotiate. At first Johnson refused to offer a full bombing halt until the middle of October. But three weeks before Election Day, Moscow sent a message to Johnson telling him that if Washington stopped the bombing of the north, Hanoi would agree to Saigon's participation in the negotiations that would follow. It was, as Averell Harriman had predicted, an effort by Moscow to prevent a victory by Richard Nixon, whom Moscow still considered "an unreconstructed cold warrior."

South Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu balked, however, at attending the talks, and Clifford reveals that after a private briefing by the president's negotiator Cyrus Vance, Henry Kissinger secretly informed John Mitchell, who was Nixon's campaign manager, that the Johnson administration would almost certainly stop the bombing before the election. A cabal then developed between Mitchell and the Chinese-born widow of General Claire Chennault, the commander of the Flying Tigers in Burma and China during World War II. Mrs. Anna Chennault passed a message on to Thieu that he should defy Johnson and delay negotiations to end the war. For Thieu the choice was between Nixon and Humphrey, and Nixon was the one.

Finally Johnson proceeded without the concurrence of the South Vietnamese government. He called a bombing halt for October 31, with negotiations to commence the day after the election. Nixon was furious. He saw it as an election ploy. If it was, it had come too late. Humphrey lost by less than seven-tenths of one percent. Had the halt come earlier, had Thieu agreed to attend the talks, Humphrey might have won, and Clark Clifford would have had his fondest wish fulfilled. Humphrey had planned to name him secretary of state.

Clifford's tale of how he tried every gimmick he knew to persuade Johnson to negotiate and begin the all but inevitable withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam is absorbing. Unfortunately, history is unforgiving. Clifford failed to accomplish his aim in time to make any significant difference. Indeed, had Clifford remained a hawk, as Johnson had expected, things would have turned out pretty much the same. Nixon would probably have won by a slightly larger margin, but the foreign policy that the Nixon administration was fated to pursue was disengagement. After all, that was what Nixon was elected to do: get us out of Vietnam. He could

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hardly have done otherwise. Yet Clifford is right to criticize the manner in which Nixon concluded the war, his widening of the conflict to all of Indochina, the delays in negotiating an American withdrawal, and the resulting deaths of more than 20,000 Americans.

Near the conclusion of his memoir, Clifford writes that "at its core the presidency is about politics." Yet in all the hundreds or thousands of hours of tapes (which Richard Holbrooke, once an editor himself, has put into lucid prose), Clifford seems almost embarrassed to admit that his great gift was to understand the politics of foreign policy. Clifford was pre-eminently a man who could get things done. In the American democracy, moreover, this is no mean accomplishment. Had Johnson, who presumed to know the value of politics beyond all else, appointed men like Clifford to his Cabinet at the beginning of his first full term as president, he might not have plunged into the mire of Indochina. Clifford's persuasive skills could have saved the country much suffering. In his memoir Clifford seems oddly not to understand that these skills are the equal of the skills of the statesmen in whose shadows he has long lingered. Perhaps Clifford's need to depict himself as something different, something better, something grander, stems from his long residency in Washington, where there is an insurmountable need to portray oneself as acting above politics.

In the end, Clark Clifford played only a marginal role in the great creative acts of foreign policy in the American century. Bretton Woods, containment, the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, NATO: all those extraordinary institutions were put into place by other men, whose achievements were nonetheless often deeply scarred by their sometimes fatal ineptitude at the great game of politics. Still, if Clifford was not a leading protagonist in the creation of postwar American foreign policy, as he insists, he was an important political strategist in the amazing election victory of Harry Truman and a prime mover in the successful effort to force Lyndon Johnson to disengage from Vietnam and in the gallant, though unsuccessful, attempt to save the presidency for the Democratic Party. Even when he was off the playing field, he had a seat in the owner's box.

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Viral Cultures

BY THOMAS W. LAQUEUR

History of AIDS: Emergence and Origin of a Modern Pandemic by Mirko D. Grmek translated by Russell C. Maulitz and Jacalyn Duffin

(Princeton University Press, 279 pp., $29.95)

History of Syphilis by Claude Quetel translated by Judith Braddock and Brian Pike

(Johns Hopkins University Press, 352 pp., $39.95)

AIDS appears at a moment of exquisite historical self-awareness. It is the first epidemic in which, as one of its students notes, "countless social scientists and journalists watch us watch ourselves"—the first postmodern epidemic, if you will. It is also the first epidemic to strike after the ecology revolution, a revolution that has forced us to understand biology in its broadest cultural context, and to grasp the consequences of human actions in relation to all other forms of life, from viruses to spotted owls. And it is the first post-civil rights, post-feminist epidemic. This means not only that it has become the object of a brand of advocacy politics born of earlier struggles, but also that, as a public issue, it is refracted through decades of legal battles over privacy, discrimination, and equal protection. Precisely because the category of disability, like the categories of race and gender, is meant to be irrelevant in the public sphere, it becomes a major arena of public controversy; whether to reveal the name of a surgeon who is HIV positive or to allow a school district to exclude a single student who has AIDS is a front-page debate.

There is also an almost irresistible urge to wax metaphorical about certain culturally potent diseases, above all about AIDS. The title of one informative collection of essays, recently published by Cambridge University Press, insists on the figurative: *A Disease of Society*. But "society," we need to be reminded, has no T-4 cells to impair and no body to waste away; people do. Mirko Grmek, a physician and a distinguished historian of medicine, proclaims that although cancer "lacked certain elements to qualify as the ideal metaphor" for a society undergoing "convulsive" change, AIDS is just right: "With its link to sex [and] drugs . . . and with the sophistication of its evolution and its strategy for spreading itself, AIDS expresses our era." Of course, an acquired immune deficiency literally expresses nothing, certainly not an era. Still, the near universal need to make AIDS speak about something outside itself has launched a veritable "epidemic of signification" that has accompanied the biological one.

Certainly the ravages of HIV I and II alone do not explain the preoccupation with the disease. Though the demographics of the disease appear to be changing, AIDS still remains concentrated on its original risk groups, the deaths of whose members might well have been expected to receive less attention than they have: 50 percent of the 176,865 adult AIDS cases reported in the United States from the beginning of the epidemic through April 1991 are identified as male homosexual, another 22 percent are i.v. drug users, and 7 percent of the men fall into both categories.

If sheer numbers are all that matter, moreover, AIDS is not a "millennial disease" or a "modern plague," at least not in the West. Even if everyone who is now HIV positive in the United States were to die, the disaster would still not be on the epochal scale of *the* Plague, which wiped out something on the order of 30 percent of the population of England and comparable proportions in other parts of Europe between 1348 and 1377. Nor does it begin to match the epidemics that devastated Native Americans when they first came in contact with the conquistadors' microbes. Even if the World Health Organization's predictions come true

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and 30 million people end up infected by the AIDS virus by the turn of the century, and even if all of them die of the disease, we will still not reach the levels, proportionally, of the 1918-19 influenza pandemic, which killed at least 30 million people within six months, though it is inexplicably faint in our historical consciousness. Smallpox in eighteenth-century American cities routinely felled proportions of the population greater than AIDS has taken in even the most hard-hit sections of East Harlem. And, as advocates of more funding for breast cancer research recently pointed out, $1.1 billion was spent on research on AIDS in 1990, while only $77 million was spent on "their" disease, despite the fact that 43,000 women died of it last year while "only" 23,000 people succumbed to the better-funded scourge.

Debates about this issue demonstrate the extraordinary importance of controlling the universe of discourse. Advocates of AIDS research make the case that in the very near future, probably by 1993, AIDS deaths will exceed those from, in this instance, breast cancer (though not lung cancer, which claimed 142,000 last year, and was even lower in funding priorities); that money spent now to stop the disease will save money in the future, should the disease remain unchecked; and that information gained in the study of the AIDS viruses is extremely valuable in other spheres. As a gendered disease, on the other hand, AIDS is nowhere close to breast cancer; "only" 18,602 cases, a little more than 10 percent of the total diagnosed cases of AIDS over the last decade, are women—fewer than half of the number that died in one year of breast cancer. (Though the number of women diagnosed with AIDS appears to be growing, it is difficult to see how the gender politics work out in this case.)

All this is *not* to deny the destruction wrought by AIDS. Nor do I mean to deny the various reasons that have been adduced for the political and cultural exigency of this particular disease: its totally unexpected appearance as a major infectious disease at a time when we arrogantly thought that we were done with them; its very high, possibly 100 percent, mortality rate; its novel and little understood property of attacking a particular cell of the immune system and thereby rendering the body defenseless against hitherto rare diseases; its association with blood, sex, drugs, and with feared, hated, and otherwise marginal groups. And there is, of course, the widespread view that AIDS gives the lie to the post-'60s chimera of sexual liberation.

Perhaps this list constitutes enough of an explanation for the special claim of AIDS on our attention. Still, for another, less visceral reason AIDS has become a disease with meaning well beyond its capacity to cause suffering and death. The rise of what can be called the politics of signification—the struggle to establish one cultural meaning of the disease rather than another, to have it regarded in one context or another (as a civil liberties issue, or a gay issue, or a sign of the shambles in which the American health care system finds itself)—turns out to be every bit as important as medicine and science, and inextricably linked to them, not only in the understanding of the disease but also in the fight against it.

There have been two responses to this development. Some say that the sooner illness is returned to its natural, biological state, the sooner it is purged of language, the better. As Susan Sontag put it, "The most truthful way of regarding illness—and the healthiest way of being ill—is the one most purified of, most resistant to, metaphorical thinking." Others maintain what might be called the postmodernist position, according to which metaphors and other ways of talking about a disease are not tools for obscuring the truth, not obfuscating expressions of this or that attitude toward an illness, but in a very real sense the stuff out of which any meaningful notion of illness is constructed. " 'Disease' does not exist," the French medical historian François Delaporte, heavily influenced by Foucault, has provocatively observed. "What does exist is not disease but practices." Or, as Paula Treichler writes, "The very nature of AIDS is constructed through language," its meanings determined not by scientific consensus but by "democracy."

This plague, in short, leaves us in a predicament of interpretation. Between the undeniable reality of suffering and death and the undeniable truth that much of what is understood by a disease is culturally constructed, we struggle uncomfortably to find a way of comprehending it. Grmek's book, in its awkward mix of straightforward epidemiology and cultural analysis, is symptomatic of this dilemma. He recounts with considerable authority the generally well-known and relatively uncontroversial history of AIDS, especially in the United States. His way of telling the story—judiciously weighing a wide array of evidence—has several advantages. It confronts the fatuous with fact, cant and hyperbole with the way things really are. Unfortunately there are reserves of distrust that such an analysis will not touch: a poll reported in *The New York Times* in October 1990 found that 10 percent of blacks interviewed believed the proposition that "the virus which causes AIDS was deliberately created in a lab in order to infect black people" and another 19 percent thought it might be true, while only 1 percent and 4 percent of whites respectively held such views.

Cutting through the metaphors and the moralizings to treat diseases as biological entities can also have important public health benefits, as Claude Quetel's history of syphilis makes clear. Because syphilis in the nineteenth century bore the potent stigma of the sewer, of filth, of illicit sex, and because the prostitutes who were singled out as its bearers were subject to harassment, to humiliating internal inspection with the newly invented speculum, and even to criminal sanctions, efforts to eradicate syphilis through traditional public health measures failed miserably. Sick prostitutes avoided inspection at all costs; doctors protected their paying male clients (a major ethical issue of the late nineteenth century was whether a physician owed a duty to disclose infection to his patient's potential spouse); and only those too poor to hide came to the attention of health authorities. Moral objections to illicit sex kept condoms from being part of the public health arsenal against venereal disease until World War II.

Too much cultural baggage, then, can obscure a disease's true nature and hamper both prophylaxis and cure. Still, it is too simple to propose that such baggage simply be cast off. It turns out that only dead diseases can actually be "purified of" or "resistant to, metaphorical thinking," to use Sontag's phrase. Diseases long gone, easily controlled, readily cured, or sufficiently obscure may indeed be purged of meaning; but not AIDS. It is thus implausible for Grmek to say that he has applied the same methods to the history of AIDS that he used in his earlier work on diseases in the ancient Greek world. For neither he nor anyone else is nearly as dispassionate about AIDS as about the plague of Athens, a fact that becomes evident in the most original portion of his account, a historical ecology of HIV I and II. Describing the changes in viral traffic occasioned by an exuberant new gay sexuality is a rather more fraught enterprise than telling the story of how new hunting patterns in early twentieth-century Mongolia caused a Black Death epidemic there.

Through much of his account, Grmek does his best to defuse the story of the current epidemic's origins. He deemphasizes the novelty of AIDS and HIV, in accordance with a general tendency among virologists to regard the uncanny

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quality of new viruses as the result more of our ignorance of the natural world than of radical shifts in viral evolution. Really new viruses, it turns out, are rare, despite our tendency to identify unfamiliar ones as such: "The historiography of epidemic diseases," as Joshua Lederberg writes, "is one of the last refuges of the concept of special creation."

It turns out that HIV I, the cause of the most prevalent form of AIDS, is at least forty years old, and perhaps more than a hundred. Viruses like HIV II are endemic in African green monkeys, whose blood and meat are used, and have been used for years, by the locals with little ill effect. Retrospective examination (guided by post-1980s hindsight) of old clinical records and blood samples turns up lots of evidence for pre-epidemic AIDS: a suspicious atypical pneumonia in one of Kaposi's original sarcoma series in 1882; better-documented cases, such as a Norwegian sailor's family that was decimated between 1966 and 1976; at least twenty reports in the American medical literature before 1980, including an adolescent homosexual in St. Louis whose case was published as a curiosity in 1973 and reopened in 1984 when some of his defrosted blood serum proved to have HIV-I antibodies; "wasting fever" noted in accounts of the nineteenth-century Ivory Coast, which may have been HIV-II infection.

So AIDS is not a new disease, in the sense that smallpox and influenza were new when they were introduced from the Old World to the Americas with devastating results for the indigenous populations. Nor is it new in evolutionary history: lentiviruses split off the retrovirus evolutionary tree; those that affected primates separated from those that did not; the HIV-I and HIV-II lines diverged, and the HIV-I population began diversifying well before the current crisis. Still, it is clear that nowhere, neither in Africa, Europe, nor the Americas, was there an epidemic before 1980. In this sense, it *is* a new "modern scourge."

And yet it is not a scourge that can be laid at the feet of God or some impersonal biological demiurge. AIDS joins the destruction of the Brazilian rain forest, the depletion of the ozone layer, acid rain, or on a much smaller scale, the threatened extinction of the spotted owl as an ecological disaster of human making, one that belongs squarely in the realm of culture.

Biology and culture mix uneasily in this sort of analysis, as in so much ecological discourse. Grmek begins with the observation that however AIDS might first have arrived, that is, even if some early European cases were of African origin, the great majority of cases, in Europe as in Haiti, came from the United States, and specifically from two locations, New York and the Los Angeles/San Francisco axis, and more specifically through one group, homosexuals. "Never in human history," he writes in a chapter called "The Liberalization of Morals," "had one city [San Francisco] known such a concentration of homosexuals, nor such promiscuity. The search for physical pleasure and multiple partners passed for fundamental expressions of human rights." One could see harbingers of the epidemic in the massive herpes, syphilis, and hepatitis-B outbreaks among the determined swappers of bodily fluids, and it is little wonder that something much worse followed. The gay community, or at least its most sexually active precincts, was "the ideal 'culture medium' " for AIDS to flourish; it mushroomed "not because they [homosexuals] transgressed certain sexual taboos, but rather certain rules for living which, until then, had concurred to maintain a relative biological equilibrium."

It would be easy to dismiss Grmek's analysis as old-fashioned homophobia unsuccessfully masquerading as value-free medicine. A tone of moral revulsion does come through; he does seem to be saying that the transgression of "certain rules for living" is causing AIDS; and he does subsume all gays under the category of a supposedly dangerous, deviant gay subculture. Much of this is objectionable. Still, stripped of its normative baggage, Grmek is making an important argument about how new patterns of human behavior create new pathways for pathogens. In a sense, he is saying: no Stonewall, no AIDS. That is, no gay community confident and powerful enough to sustain institutionally and to defend politically a certain sort of sexual subculture, no new viral ecology.

Obviously a new "culture media" did flourish and an old equilibrium was upset, and new patterns of human behavior created new pathways for pathogens. (Clearing the pampas for grain cultivation changed the habitat for mice and created the conditions for Argentine hemorrhagic fever.) The question is not whether this is true (it manifestly is), but how it is to be evaluated. Human actions, human movements, and human use of the world's resources have *always* upset equilibria, and only in an unimaginably static world would things be otherwise. This is the unsettling realization forced on us by an ecological view of the world: our actions in one sphere, however laudable, necessary, or acceptable, can have dire consequences in another sphere.

The rest of Grmek's account of the new viral ecology is somewhat less emotionally charged, although it continues to demonstrate how intertwined the worlds of culture and pathenogenesis really are. And it calls attention to the ironic role played by technological and medical progress in the dramatically rapid spread of the disease. Fast, cheap, and plentiful air transport succeeded in doing within months what it would have taken years to do before. New techniques in treating hemophilia opened another world to the previously rare virus. The therapeutic use of plasma factors VIII and IX doubled the life expectancy of hemophiliacs, but it also made them the most vulnerable group to HIV; great quantities of serum are used to make the concentrated plasma products, and some of it was bound to be contaminated. A life-saving procedure turned into a highway for the deadly virus. The increase in drug addiction introduced another group of victims, whose vulnerability was further increased by the replacement of sterilized glass and metal syringes by so-called disposable (but often reused) plastic ones.

Grmek's general framework, of course, is not entirely novel. The great nineteenth-century epidemiologists had already discovered that death is a social disease. One need not subscribe to moralizing and homophobic language to see AIDS through the powerful lens of a renewed ecological consciousness that

Stuck

The bolt was rusted tight.
Tried banging, banging didn't help.
Tried shaking, flecks of rust fell
like fossil sparks. Tried cursing.
A thick stream of curse
spattered the stubborn metal.
Gave it the wrench,
the wrench flew off the handle.
Tried silent meditation good
for a lifetime of peace.
The bolt disappeared, the day
disappeared, ghosts walked through
the negative of night, high wires
hummed, my hair grayed, thinned,
whitened, swirled like wispy snow
driven off an adamant mountain.
I opened my eyes: the bolt head
fell off, but the bolt stuck.
I rose from that place hating
the ruined machine at my feet
and called for cold beer, forgiveness: nothing rusts like tears.

RODGER KAMENETZ

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forces upon us the realization that we have not, and probably never will, reach a biological equilibrium with pathogens. And the constructivist—broadly speaking, the postmodern—sensibility has made us acutely aware of how directly our institutions and perspective define a specific illness.

AIDS, after all, is not a disease in the classical sense. There is no specific lesion that is its sign, in the way that the particular state of a cell marks it as cancerous. P[illegible]nts die not of the effects of HIV, but of a variety of diseases, constantly shifting and different in Africa and the West, to which the virus makes the body susceptible. We would not even know about the new "disease," moreover, or at least we would not have known about it as soon as we did, had the Centers for Disease Control not collected and amplified reports from a relatively small number of widely dispersed clinical facilities. Before the 1970s we could not have described the disease the way we do now, because before then neither retroviruses nor the relevant immunology had been discovered.

As political activists in the current cultural climate realize, the matter of definition is far from theoretical: the number of cases, and who counts as having the disease for purposes of insurance, state assistance, or coverage by federal or state statutes against disability discrimination, depend critically on what conditions are included. And this is not a scientific question. It is a sociocultural, hence a political, one. When the CDC added "wasting syndrome" and certain neurological conditions to the definition of AIDS, a large number of people who were judged ineligible for certain forms of assistance suddenly qualified for them.

Antibody tests, made possible by the discovery of the viral culprit, have vastly complicated the question of what it is to have a disease. There is no currently detectable difference between the T-4 cell status that would distinguish someone who is "merely" HIV positive and someone who "has" AIDS. No one would argue that "just" being HIV positive should place one under the protection of the 1989 Federal Disability Act. Full-blown AIDS is covered. But what about people (and this seems particularly relevant to sero-positive women) who do not have any of the AIDS defining diseases, but do have symptoms attributable to their immune status? These are the sorts of questions that we do not have to answer about dead and long-gone diseases. They are also questions that thrust AIDS into some of the major current political debates about entitlements and about rights.

Moreover, the inescapable cultural conception of AIDS, and of disease in general, is crucial in determining how sufferers respond to their illness, and how society responds to them. Ineradicable metaphors do matter. AIDS struck many homosexuals at a time when they (and the larger intellectual community) had become acutely aware of the political dimensions of medicine, past and present. As Gunther Risse has shown, quarantine and other public health measures, from the plague epidemic in seventeenth-century Rome to polio in twentieth-century New York, have been determined more by the social status, class, or race of the supposedly dangerous population, or other extraneous interests of the state, than by science. These facts were not lost on those who fought successfully against similar strategies proposed in the early 1980s for AIDS victims and/or HIV positive individuals. A long history of medical hostility led many of those who first encountered AIDS to regard it as the last in a long series of efforts by doctors to construct homosexuality as a pathological state. "A gay cancer!" exclaims the Foucault character in a recent French novel. "It was too perfect."

But considerable progress has already been made in avoiding the dangers of the simplest, most insidious social constructions of the disease. From being *the* modern plague, or even the most recent expression of the wrath of God on a sinful humanity, AIDS has become *the* chronic disease through which an array of more general issues are refracted. The shift in emphasis is clear between Elizabeth Fee and Daniel Fox's earlier book, *AIDS: The Burdens of History*, and their forthcoming study, *AIDS: The Making of a Chronic Disease* (University of California Press). Unlike earlier epidemic diseases, AIDS comes at a time when the state and its agencies cannot simply let people (at least not the articulate people who are a large percentage of its victims) die unnoticed in the streets. The CDC monitors the disease, and figures are announced in the media. Other agencies fight to do studies of its potential spread. Insurance companies worry about coverage, and the great question of who is to bear risk in our society is loudly debated: someone has to pay for this slow death, just as someone has to pay to take care of others who are chronically ill. Hospital unions and other medical groups of various sorts struggle to make caring for the sick less dangerous to their members. Sufferers struggle for resources. AIDS has moved to another cultural arena, to more familiar, mundanely difficult ground.

Nor is that the only meta-medical context that has affected the interpretation of AIDS. This is the first post-civil rights disease, that is, it falls squarely into the legal discourse of anti-discrimination that has been growing since the 1950s, as Thomas Stoddard and Walter Rieman argue in *A Disease of Society*. In *Plyer* v. *Doe* (1982), for example, the Supreme Court held that the illegal immigrant status of children's parents was irrelevant to their exclusion from public schools; in *Cleburne [Texas]* v. *Cleburne Living Center* (1985) it decided that the city's denial of a building permit to a private organization that wanted to build a home for the mentally retarded on the grounds that they constituted a group in need of special protection from floods, harassment of local children, etc., constituted "an irrational prejudice against the mentally retarded." Such scrutiny of state action not only redounds to the benefit of those with AIDS, it projects the dilemmas of disease squarely into one of the great political and cultural movements of our time.

Unlike victims of earlier epidemics, those with AIDS can avail themselves of a variety of federal and state statutes (as well as court opinions) that ban both private and public assaults on what have been construed as their civil rights. Equal protection doctrines have stopped wholesale testing. They have required elaborate justifications for denying a physician a license or even for making public his HIV status. (Changing interpretations of the law of privacy are important as well.) They have prevented a variety of other abuses in employment, health care, and housing. All of this does not mean, of course, that there has been, or continues to be, no discrimination against those with AIDS. But it does mean that the epidemic is intimately tied not to the old discourse of repression, but to the new discourse of rights.

AIDS has become, not surprisingly, a major conduit of empathy. Nobody today would see in typhoid fever the sinews of human connectedness, as Carlyle did, writing of the Irish widow who infected "seventeen 'persons' saying in such undeniable way, 'You *see* I was your sister.' " But AIDS is the midwife of a sort of fellow feeling, at least in some quarters. Not for all sufferers, not everywhere, but the disease has incited what Carlyle hoped for from typhus: the notion that those who die are our brothers and sisters. One could not have imagined in times past that there would be concerts, dinners, and art shows to raise funds to benefit victims of syphilis, or influenza, or other infectious killers.

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The Arabs of Israel

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The papers and television bring us daily reports about the happenings in the areas administered by Israel—Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza Strip, and the allegedly poor treatment the Arabs receive at the hands of the Israeli authorities. Leaving the administered territories to future analysis, it is of interest to consider the status of Arab citizens in Israel proper.

What are the facts?

■ Israel is a democratic country—an open, pluralistic, and egalitarian society. Different religions, cultures, and social traditions coexist. Protection of such diversity is embedded in Israel's traditions and confirmed by the government. Seventeen per cent of the total population (700,000 people) are non-Jews, most of them Arabs, and some Druze. Like all other Israeli citizens, they have full rights to vote and to hold elective office. Both Arabs and Druze hold seats in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. Every Knesset, since the founding of the state in 1948, has had Arab and Druze members. All transactions in the Knesset are simultaneously translated into Arabic, and Arab members may address the Knesset in Arabic.

■ It is official policy of the Israeli government to foster the language, culture, and traditions of the Arab minority, in the educational system and in daily life. Arabic is an official language in Israel, together with Hebrew. Israel's Arabic press is the most vibrant and independent of any country in the region: there are more than 20 Arabic periodicals. They publish what they please, subject only to the same military censorship as Jewish publications. There are daily TV and radio programs in Arabic. Arabic is taught in Jewish secondary schools. Israeli universities are renowned centers of learning in the history and literature of the Arab Middle East.

■ Education and literacy of the Arab population in Israel is as high and probably higher than in any Arab country. The literacy rate among Israeli Arabs is 95%, virtually the same as for Israeli Jews. There are some 700 Arab educational institutions in Israel, with about 200,000 students—17 times as many as in 1948, when the State of Israel was created. 90% of Arab children attend school, probably the highest ratio of any Arab population anywhere. Israeli universities and technical institutions are freely available to the Arabs. About 3,000 Arab students attend such schools.

■ All religious communities in Israel enjoy the full protection of the State. Israeli Arabs—Moslems, as well as many Christian denominations—are free to exercise their faiths, to observe their own weekly day of rest and holidays, and to administer their own internal affairs. Each community has its own religious councils and courts, and has full jurisdiction over religious affairs, including matters of personal status, such as marriage and divorce. The holy sites of all religions are administered by their own authorities and protected by the government.

■ In contrast to the non-Israeli Arab world, Arab women in Israel enjoy the same status as men. Israeli law grants women equal rights, including the right to vote and to be elected to public office, prohibits polygamy and child marriage, and has thus vastly changed the status of women, to far above that of any country in the region. Israeli health standards are by far the highest in the Middle East. Israeli health institutions are freely open to all Arabs, on the same basis as they are to Jews.

■ There is, however one difference between the "rights" of Arabs and Jews in Israel. Israeli and Druze men are required to do three years of military service and then serve one month every year until they are 50. Arabs are exempted from military duty and are not required to perform any compensating civilian service. Since the surrounding Arab states, with the recent exception of Egypt, are the avowed enemies of Israel and are dedicated to its destruction, this exemption is granted by the Israeli Government to its Arab citizens, so as to spare them conflicts of loyalty and conscience.

Contrary to propaganda and to what many believe, the Arabs in Israel are full-fledged citizens, enjoy every civil right, and have the same status in law as Jewish Israelis. In summary, they enjoy the highest standards of living and liberty of any Arabs in the Middle East. It is instructive and sobering to compare the condition of the approximately 700,000 Arabs in Israel with that of the pitiful remnants of Jewry in Arab countries. Jews have been living in Arab countries for almost 2000 years. Under Arab dominance, they were always third-class citizens and subject to harassment and to persecution. There were about 900,000 Jews in Arab countries in 1948—now there are fewer than 25,000. But there are now 700,000 Arabs in Israel, as against 150,000 in 1948—a more than four-fold increase. These figures alone would seem to prove that things can't be all that bad for Arabs in Israel.

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have seen the extraordinary sight of a conservative Republican president's Commission on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Epidemic announcing in 1988 that "HIV-related discrimination is impairing the nation's ability to limit the spread of the virus." Thomas Parrans, FDR's surgeon general, refused on moral grounds to recommend condoms to prevent the spread of syphilis; Reagan's surgeon general put his views on sexual morality to the side and publicly recommended "safe sex."

To be sure, the new cultural politics of AIDS is not all rosy. The fact that AIDS is now a chronic disease and not an acute epidemic disease puts it squarely into a medical system disastrously ineffective in dealing with both prevention and chronic care. And the poor, the blacks, and the women suffering from the disease are nearly forgotten. Four times as many people per thousand die of AIDS in East Harlem as die in the high-income area of Kips Bay-Yorkville, and ten times as many as in the middle-income area of Astoria-Long Island City. But these disproportions carry through shamefully to other chronic conditions: the death rate from cirrhosis of the liver and diabetes is four times in Harlem what it is in Yorkville; infant mortality three times as high. And while the rich can afford private treatment for alcoholism, drug treatment programs for the poor, especially important in the battle against AIDS among people of color, are being starved.

Though AIDS has put immense pressure on many conventional attitudes, it has not quite opened the hearts of our society to embrace the poor, those invisible sufferers without a voice, either at home or in distant places. AIDS is manifestly not "just" a disease; indeed, no living, threatening disease is "just" a disease. But it is also not a cultural construct whose nature must be "democratically" determined, as some suggest. Sontag is wrong in holding out hope for disease stripped of metaphorical thinking, of meaning outside itself or the life of the individual sufferer. But equally chimerical is the view that the very "nature of AIDS" or any other disease is constructed through language. Manifestly diseases have their own transcultural "natures," and no amount of cultural analysis will alter the molecular biology of how HIV encounters the proteins of a T-4 cell. War may be too important to be left to the generals (or, in the case of AIDS, to the doctors and the scientists), but that does not mean that it can be fought without them.

And yet the constructivist position does explain how we deal, as a society,

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with a disease. Ecology, the civil rights movement (and its political progeny in the courts and on the streets), a new self-consciousness—all have given AIDS a cultural centrality unlike that of any other diseases in our history. To paraphrase Marx, both viruses and we make our own history, but neither makes it as we please.

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Shrinking Authority

BY ADAM PHILLIPS

The Legacy of Erich Fromm by Daniel Burston

(Harvard University Press, 288 pp., $29.95)

Psychoanalysis teaches people a way of hearing what they say that is aimed at making them speak in new ways. In psychoanalytic treatment, through a process of endlessly redescribing his life to someone else, the patient, as he used to be called, gradually begins to talk differently. This entails mourning one's old vocabulary, often the words that one was brought up on; and losing some of one's favorite words for oneself can be a mixed blessing. The new vocabulary, too, is not an entirely straightforward matter. If a person ends up speaking psychoanalysis, then the treatment has failed and must be called indoctrination. If a person ends up speaking his own too idiosyncratic language, he will be deemed mad, or inauthentic, or silly. Psychoanalysis, that is to say, is torn between helping people to conform and helping them to create revolutions.

Erich Fromm, as this very useful book shows, was aware of the way in which psychoanalysis too easily made people conform to what seemed to be at its inception a new and astonishing criticism of conformism. "Consensual validation as such," Fromm wrote, "has no bearing whatsoever on mental health." And yet the psychoanalysts themselves had replaced the questioning of what constituted a good life with membership in a psychoanalytic "community" that was Olympian in its certainties and glib in its skepticism. Freud's sense that in every psychoanalysis a culture as well as an individual was being analyzed quickly began to sound simpleminded, particularly in psychoanalytic circles.

Psychoanalysis as a refuge from politics was a contradiction in terms for Fromm. It could only reinforce, in insidious ways, the kinds of suffering it claimed to alleviate. "Psychoanalysis," Fromm wrote in 1932,

> has focused on the structure of bourgeois society and its patriarchal family as the normal situation. . . . Since they [the psychoanalysts] did not concern themselves with the variety of life experience, the socioeconomic structure of other kinds of society, and therefore did not try to explain psychic structure as determined by social structure, they necessarily began to analogize instead of analysing.

To analogize instead of to analyze is unconsciously to reproduce in theory what you assume you are curing in practice.

Like his contemporaries Reich and Marcuse, Fromm knew that psychoanalysis needed Marxism—as it now needs feminism—to remind the always potentially rarefied and affluent world of psychoanalysis that people live in a world constituted by class interests and economic hierarchies. What Daniel Burston's book makes very clear, by implication and by quotation, is Fromm's sense that psychoanalysis could only become useful local knowledge by including the insights, if not the beliefs, generated by Marxism. One did not have to believe in an inevitable Historical Process to see the pertinence of economic conditions for an individual's development. Individual lives, he argued, get lost in the circus of grand abstractions.

It is, after all, psychoanalysis that has turned the language of feeling into jargon. Because psychoanalysts have thought it better to write psychoanalytic papers for each other than to read novels or poems, they seem always to be writing about the same two or three people with the same three or four "problems." It is one of the impressive ironies of Freud's work, which Fromm was quick to recognize, that people who take him seriously always go on talking about the things he talks about or the things that he leaves out. The escape from freedom, to echo one of Fromm's pertinent titles, is pervasive in psychoanalytic societies, and this has consequences for the treatment of patients. As Fromm realized, those who have conformed do not find it easy to celebrate other people's possibilities. Ambivalence may be central to psychoanalytic theory, but psychoanalysts—that is, psychoanalysts who love psychoanalysis—never write about what they hate about psychoanalysis. It should be part of Fromm's legacy, as Burston suggests, to keep alive the spirit of dissent, of questioning.

Fromm was born in Frankfurt in 1900, the only child of an unhappily married middle-class Jewish couple. His early intellectual interests were impressively various. He "mixed conventional Talmudic instruction," Burston writes, "with mysticism, philosophy, socialism, and psychoanalysis, all in conjunction with conservative Judaism." After studying sociology at Heidelberg, he returned to Frankfurt to edit a small Jewish newspaper, and within a year met his first analyst, Frieda Reichmann, who became his first wife. It seems a shame, in retrospect, that psychoanalysis and journalism had to part company. In 1927 Fromm began analytic training in Berlin with Hans Sachs and Theodore Reik. The Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute was unusually progressive; non-medical analysts held senior positions, and there was a free psychoanalytic clinic for poorer people. After completing his training in 1929, Fromm spent half his time practicing analysis in Berlin and the other half working at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. Here he began his association with Horkheimer and Marcuse and forged strong links with what became known as the Frankfurt School. It was after his immigration to the States, in 1933, that this affiliation became problematic.

Fromm, as a member of what Burston calls Freud's "loyal opposition," did a very unusual thing, unusual, that is, for a committed psychoanalyst. He tried genuinely to broaden the scope of psychoanalysis by integrating psychoanalytic theory into a more diverse cultural conversation that could include economics, philosophy, and anthropology, among many other disciplines. This, of course, has been the enduring legacy of the Frankfurt School of which he was an early member; but what Fromm did not do, unlike some other members of that school (and certain other psychoanalysts), was to promote those forms of mandarin intelligence that could produce fascinating criticisms of culture that hardly anyone in the culture was able to read.

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In a consumer culture, accessibility inevitably leads to obsolescence. It was the more hermetic members of the Frankfurt School, Adorno and Benjamin in particular, who had more staying power than Fromm. Those who wanted life after death had to be difficult. Fromm, however, wrote accessible and widely popular books—books that could inspire adolescents, which is always a good sign—about psychoanalysis, about psychoanalysis and Marxism, and most interesting I think, about psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism. His most famous books, *The Sane Society* (1955), *The Art of Loving* (1956), and *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973), were best sellers; and yet, or therefore, Fromm is rarely talked about or taught by the Owners of Culture.

Psychoanalysis, when it is not hidden away as dogma, is genuinely pluralistic and democratic, in a way that Fromm appreciated, because it encourages us to take seriously those things we are inclined to dismiss. For that reason, *The Legacy of Erich Fromm* is a timely book, since Fromm's work has virtually disappeared from intelligent consideration. And with it has gone an often penetrating criticism of the idolatry that constitutes the culture industry. In all his writing Fromm was trying to keep alive the possibility of being authoritative without being authoritarian. All idols, by disarming pertinent forms of criticism, distracted their worshipers from more problematic but interesting desires. And psychoanalysis, like any other cultural artifact, if it was to be useful, also had to be protected from the potential worship of its admirers. With these preoccupations, of course, Fromm was at once traditionally Jewish and radically secular.

Because psychoanalysis has one father, unlike, say, the novel or philosophy, it became a convenient oasis for rebels and conformists alike. For Freud to become a certain kind of authority, or even idol, he needed to surround himself with people who wanted a little authority in their lives. But it is often forgotten, and again Burston is informative about, how many of the early analysts were also Marxists, or had been Marxists in their youth. Like the other great early Freudian Marxists (Reich, Federn, and Fenichel the most notable among them), Fromm brought to psychoanalysis, among many other things, an uneasy relationship to his own authoritativeness.

They were interested in the individual, but not in the cult of the individual. The cult of the individual, by denying dependence, the multifarious links and involvements, the social context, that makes a life possible, and by praising invulnerability, promoted the notion of people as obstacles to each other. For Fromm and his colleagues, certainly, the cult of the individual, by encouraging the submissions of envy, and replacing the idea of the good life with the idea of the enviable life, actually diminished the possibilities for individuality, and constricted its scope as something profoundly communal. These were not the preoccupations of the newly emerging psychoanalytic orthodoxy that by the '60s had turned into a Limited Company that was, so to speak, patenting its product.

Burston suggests that the combination of Fromm's family history as a traditional (in the religious sense) middle-class Jew growing up in Germany and the events in Germany in the '20s and '30s made him a socialist. His "pious upbringing" was to make him a generous admirer of unusual men and at the same time a severe critic of all forms of idolatry. For idolatry was simply a way of pre-empting a personal life. Throughout his own life, Burston tell us, Fromm retained an interest in Hasidism and the Scriptures alongside an abiding respect for Trotsky as "revolutionary thinker, as general, as exile."

If Burston sometimes worries that Fromm is not quite as sound as he should be—"he is often characterized," he writes nervously, "as some sort of Polyanna" (intellectuals are rarely impressed by people who are happy)—the man who emerges from between the lines of this book is a vividly complicated man, indeed an extraordinary man. We need only note that Fromm's second wife was the woman with whom Walter Benjamin fled from the Nazis in 1940, and that Fromm's devoted friend Ivan Illich helped bury him when he died in 1980, to see the disparate worlds with which Fromm's life connects. And Fromm's extensive writings, to which Burston gives detailed attention, are remarkable for their range and for certain insistent preoccupations. Fromm's persistent interest in idolatry, the nature of aggression, and the need for mutuality both in psychoanalytic treatment and lived life is not easy to dismiss. These rightly remain issues that are still germane to the theory and the practice of psychoanalysis, and of interest to people who do not care for it. Fromm was certainly writing for both kinds of people.

Since the most exhilarating psychoanalytic theory now idealizes incoherence, the pleasures of common sense in psychoanalysis can easily be lost. The commonsense analysts—Anna Freud, Kohut, Fromm himself—tend to be accessible and reassuring. Their virtue is that they are often comforting, which is their vice to the more inspired bizarre analysts like Bion and Lacan, who demand not that their patients get better but that they pursue Truth. The commonsense analysts know what it is for someone to get better. For the bizarre analysts, the whole notion of getting better smacks of omniscience. After all, how could one know if someone was better unless one already knew what a good life was?

Fromm is particularly interesting in Burston's understated account because of the unusual mixture of the bizarre and the commonsensical in his work. As a writer he is calm and intelligible, but he is so wary of mystification that he never allows himself to get into a muddle, and he rarely takes the chance of being a bit weird. Still, if the commonsense analysts, unlike the bizarre analysts, never really intrigue us, they do focus our attention. So, for example, Fromm could observe lucidly, for those who were not already too knowing, that societies "develop a system, or categories, which determine the forms of awareness. This system works, as it were, as a socially conditioned filter; experience cannot enter awareness unless it can penetrate this filter." In Fromm's version, it was the aim of psychoanalysis to make socially proscribed emotional experience available and by so doing to modify the forms of awareness. Fromm is at his most radical in his commitment to alternatives. He never becomes a bizarre analyst, though, because he never stops wanting to help us.

At his worst Fromm had the deadly piety of the committed iconoclast, and Burston's book does not evade this. But Fromm's apparent banality could be provocative and engaging, and his writing makes us notice things. He was drawn to Zen Buddhism, I imagine, partly because of its lightness of touch, something not easily found in psychoanalytic theory. Psychoanalysis rarely makes one smile. But Fromm, I think, wanted it to provoke a smile, at least occasionally.

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CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

cide, and other maladies are "caused" by overdoses of rock and MTV, more than a few of these pious Christian soldiers might go ballistic if they felt "the Jews" were behind it all.

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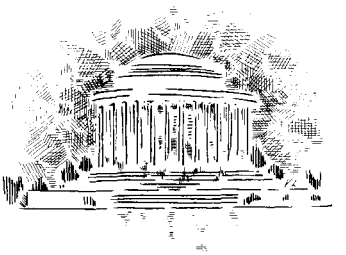
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Truth or hair

IT'S ABOUT TWO YEARS SINCE I first started using Rogaine, and about six months since I first told a friend about it. I confided in my parents before anybody else. My father, who is almost completely bald, volunteered to pay for my first year's supply (around $600) in a conversation that, I am saddened to report, bore an alarming resemblance to a *New York Times Magazine* "About Men" column. Then, slowly, as the light brown fuzz began to accumulate on my crown, I let others in on the secret. These days my Rogaine is completely (and literally) out of the closet: no more scurrying to the bathroom to hide it when guests arrive; no more self-hating, feverish scalp massages in the office rest room. Recently—to the consternation of a couple of onlookers—I even used its curious little plastic nozzle to spray my roots in the Y locker room. It was a pleasantly liberating experience. Free from the gnawing self-doubt of the minoxidil-dependent, I've even managed to overcome the guilt provoked by my hairline vanity. From hair shirt to hair growth: What more appropriate rallying cry for American Catholics in the 1990s?

WHAT STRIKES ME NOW, THOUGH, is the extraordinary plight of those who claim to forswear such things. One of my best friends is 25 and, shall we say, follically challenged. For him, however, my minoxidil use is not an occasion for sharing, as one might hope, but an object of continuing and withering scorn. This, in turn, as he usually confesses after a few beers, is, of course, a cover for massive follicle-envy, but he feels such intense shame at the thought of doing anything about it that he is paralyzed in semi-unsured limbo. It is a tragic spectacle. He still subscribes to the conventional male line that he shouldn't care much about his appearance, that his attractiveness is of only passing concern to him, that his sexual appeal to others is entirely a function of his intellect or charm, or job, or whatever, while all the time caring desperately and secretly that he's losing his sexual edge as his brow edges down the lower part of his neck. The burning question of the day, it seems to me, is how to reach out to those such as him. Those of us who occasionally acquiesce to this vanity-denial syndrome have a duty to help our fellow Y-chromosomes get over themselves, to weaken, whenever we can, the destructive notion that being paunchy, slobby, and bald as Allan Bloom is somehow a turn-on. We need to help them cancel their subscriptions to *Esquire*, throw away their fly fishing equipment, suppress those smug macho smirks when ordering a bacon cheeseburger, burn those tank tops that don't reach past their navels. Women, in turn, need to help men in denial. They can most helpfully do this by dating only those who work out regularly, buy their own boxer shorts, and have a full head of hair. And all of us males with a strange, wispy clump of neo-hair on our upper temples should simply fess up about how it got there.



INSPIRED BY ANTHONY Lewis's recent I'm-on-vacation-but-the-op-ed-page-isn't column on his excursion through the historic English countryside ("At Home Abroad: World Enough and Time," *New York Times*, June 17), I took a stroll recently in my own neighborhood. At each street corner, drunk old men lay passed out on the sidewalk, as no doubt they used to do in the early eighteenth century. Drug deals were made at gunpoint, echoes of Victorian commerce and violence ricocheting through our capital city. Children sorted through trash cans looking for used syringes, reminders of the spirit of tenacity that so blesses the young. The old, freshly looted deli is now partly a restaurant, partly a nightclub, its communal meaning stretched across both night and day, its retained architectural facade a mere front for the changing reality behind. A feeling of localism remains strong, and yet, blended with all the nationalities now living next to one another, it also evokes a universalism that is profound. The old echoes the new; the currents of change lap against the beaches of unchanging humanity. Whither Washington? Only time—and the need for another June column—will tell.

I'M NOT SURE WHERE THE ACTUAL term "politically correct" came from, but we surely need to find out. William Safire cites Mao ("Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?"). Friends tell me it was coined by the near New Left either as an ironic twist on its own silliness or as a pejorative term about the far New Left. This at first blush esoteric distinction is vital for the entire future of the debate. "Politically correct" now has two possible fates before it. It could go the way of "quaker," "suffragette," or "neoconservative," which were invented by enemies as lampoons, but were then successfully appropriated by the mocked. Or it could become the equivalent of "queer," in which the group attempts to co-opt a term of abuse and fails miserably to get away with it. My own hunch is that it's going to be the latter, and this fact alone will decide the outcome of the battle. Evidence comes in the latest *Village Voice*, which devotes considerable space to the pro-p.c. camp but never quite manages to defend it outright. This is a shrewd move in the spin wars, and those of us in the anti-p.c. ranks will surely need time to counter it. The *Voice* wisely spends far more energy savaging the anti-p.c. brigade—D'Souza, Kimball, Paglia, et al.—than elucidating p.c. itself, marking, indeed, a crucial breakthrough in *l'affaire d'étiquette politique*: the official anti-anti-p.c. position. Now at last the debate proper can begin, in the grand American tradition (see "anti-Vietnam," "anti-anti-Communist," etc.) that so elevated the cold war. Indeed, we may soon be reaching that happy equilibrium in which neither side feels obliged to address the intellectual questions at all and can settle cheerfully instead into vicious personal attacks on each other. The summer already begins to look a little less tedious. For the record, by the way, I'm now anti-anti-anti-p.c., and, believe me, it beats reading Derrida.

READERS ARE HEREBY INVITED TO surpass the following sentence from a commencement address for platitudinous, uplifting blather. It was pronounced by John W. Gardner, founder of Common Cause, at Stanford University and was excerpted in *The New York Times* as follows: "Life is an endless unfolding, and if we wish it to be, an endless process of self-discovery, an endless and unpredictable dialogue between our own potentialities and the life situations in which we find ourselves." Selections can be made from past or present commencement addresses, and should be sent to this office. Speeches made by Anthony Lewis are, I regret to say, invalid.

ANDREW SULLIVAN

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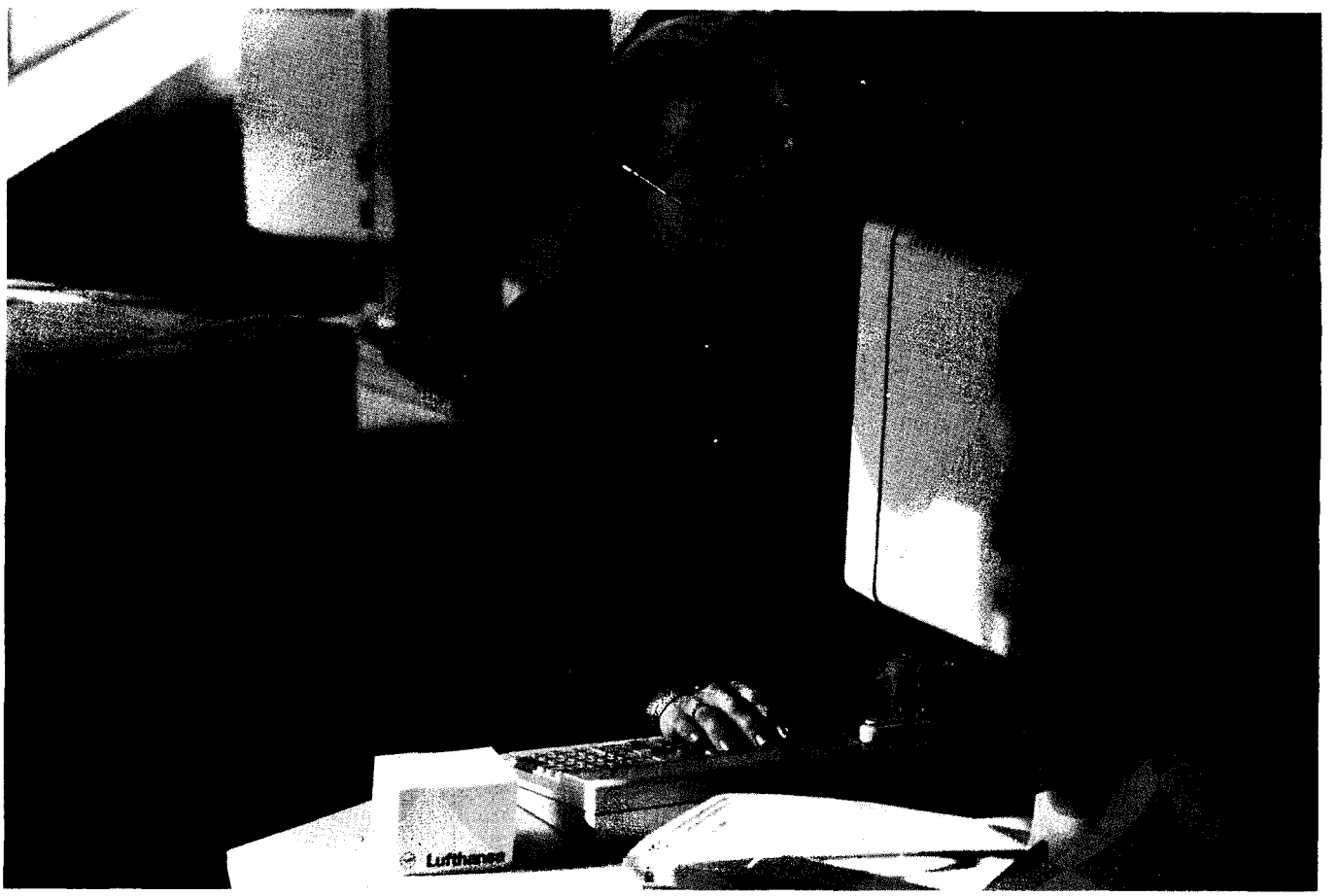
She'll get you from Sydney to Bangkok to Budapest. And even help you pack.



Linda has been known to go out of her way when she makes a reservation. She not only gets you from point A to point B, she can also point out the weather, and if you'll need a sweater for cool nights or shorts for balmy days. Or she might advise you to pack something formal for that four-star restaurant in Milan. Now, we don't always expect Linda to go this far. She does it because she wants to make your trip memorable. It's a desire shared by everyone at Lufthansa. We like to think of it as a passion. One you feel at 30,000 feet or before you even leave the ground. *A passion for perfection*℠ that ensures you the best flying experience possible.

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